

**Candidate
Information
Booklet**

IRC67030

**Office of the Attorney General for
Northern Ireland**

**Solicitor to the Attorney General for
Northern Ireland**

**Completed Application Forms
must be returned to HRConnect
no later than 12 noon (UK time)
on
Friday 4th June 2010**

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BACKGROUND

On devolution of justice, the arrangement whereby the Attorney General for England and Wales is also Attorney General for Northern Ireland comes to an end. The Justice (NI) Act 2002 provides for the appointment of an independent, non-political Attorney General for Northern Ireland. The Attorney General has a range of statutory and non-statutory responsibilities including as chief legal adviser to the Executive.

The Attorney General's Office will deal with the most important and complex legal matters facing the Executive and Departments, providing advice and where necessary conducting litigation. The establishment of a statutorily independent Attorney General marks a significant change in how the top end of government legal services is organized and delivered in Northern Ireland, and puts the rule of law at the very heart of government.

The Attorney has responsibility for referring any Assembly legislation, where there is doubt about its vires, to the UK Supreme Court, and is a notice party in devolution litigation. Statute provides that the Attorney General for Northern Ireland may participate in the proceedings of the Assembly to the extent permitted by its standing orders but he may not vote in the Assembly.

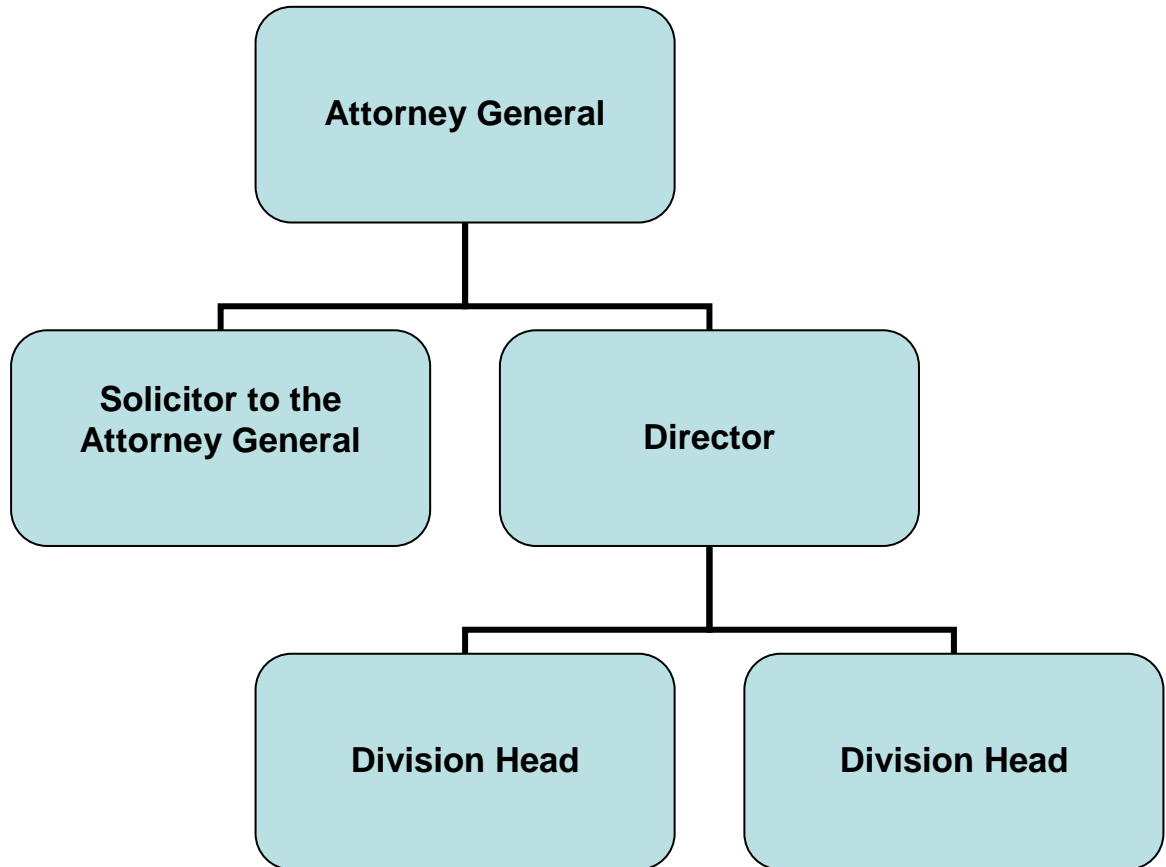
Other responsibilities of the Attorney include representing the public interest in charity matters; ordering fresh inquests; and issuing human rights guidance to criminal justice organizations.

To guarantee the independence of the Attorney, his Office will have an arm's length relationship with OFMDFM. Staff will have civil service terms and conditions.

At the core of the Office will be a legal secretariat responsible for providing advice on the most important and complex matters facing the Executive and Ministers.

TOP LEVEL ORGANISATIONAL CHART

Office of the Attorney General (NI)



The Solicitor, Director and Division Heads are all equivalent to Senior Civil Service Grade 5

JOB DESCRIPTION

This is a permanent full-time appointment and is a Grade 5 NICS post within the Senior Civil Service (SCS).

The successful candidate will be employed in the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland.

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

SALARY

The salary for the post will be within the range £57,300 to £116,000 (under review) within which pay progression will be performance related. Starting salary is normally the minimum of the payscale; however a higher starting salary may be available where it is considered that this is appropriate, for example where a successful applicant has additional relevant experience and/or qualifications. If the successful candidate is an existing civil servant, normal regrading terms will apply.

LOCATION

The postholder will be based initially in Lesley House, 25 Wellington Place, Belfast, BT1 6GD. It is envisaged that the permanent location will also be in Belfast City Centre.

TRAVEL

Although based in Belfast, the postholder may be expected to travel throughout Northern Ireland, as well as nationally and occasionally internationally as required.

WORKING HOURS

In common with all SCS appointments, the postholder will be required to work outside their normal conditioned hours, where it is necessary, to fulfil the demands of the post.

HOLIDAYS

In addition to the statutory holidays, the annual leave entitlement is 30 days.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Solicitor to the Attorney is responsible, under the direction of the Attorney General, for the conduct of litigation undertaken by the Attorney or in those cases in which the Attorney is not instructed by the Departmental Solicitor's Office. The Solicitor will be responsible for advising the Attorney on the conduct of litigation and for ensuring that the very highest standards are set and maintained in the conduct of all proceedings in which the Office participates.

The Solicitor will often be working on highly visible issues and politically sensitive events where law and politics coincide, which will require creativity and a highly developed sense of judgment. Given the proximity between the postholder and the Attorney, the issues which will come will by their nature be sensitive and difficult legal issues, often to very tight timescales, the ramifications of which may impact across a wide part of the public and private sectors. Many of the topics on which advice is sought will have European Convention on Human Rights/European Union dimensions.

Decisions will often be required at very short notice - the leave, substantive hearing and appeal stages of an urgent judicial review can happen within a matter of hours or days - but even when there is considerable time pressure the quality of advice and representation must be maintained.

The postholder will need to provide advice at short notice on any legal implications of papers being considered by the Executive.

The solicitor must be able to engage personally in such advocacy as is from time to time open to solicitors in Northern Ireland. The ability to present a case with courage, clarity and conviction is essential.

While the number of people managed by the postholder will be small, (as presently envisaged, only 1 lawyer will report to the Solicitor to the Attorney General) the postholder will be working closely with other able lawyers. An emphasis on teamwork and joint contribution to projects will be critical given the highly complex and multi-faceted nature of the work undertaken by the Office.

In the establishment phase of the Office the person appointed will need, leading by example, to foster an approach consistent with the desired culture of the Office. The solicitor will make a vital contribution to the development of a dedicated team capable of responding to the complex range of demands to which the Office will respond. It will be important to encourage open communication and flexibility within the legal team and the wider Office, as projects will often call for a variety of specialisms and approaches. The postholder will assist the team through the difficult set-up period and beyond.

The main duties of the Solicitor will be:

- providing ad hoc advice on sensitive and difficult legal issues, often to very tight timescales. These issues would not be the subject of formal requests for advice;
- engaging with Government at senior levels and supporting the Attorney in engagement with Ministers;
- litigation on devolution matters, i.e., where there is a dispute about the legal ability of the Assembly, Executive or a Department to act;
- providing solicitor services for litigation where it is not appropriate to use Departmental Solicitor's Office services;
- advising the Attorney on applications to reopen contentious inquests; contempt of court; vexatious litigants; the appointment of an amicus curiae; and use of the "relator" to allow a public authority to enforce the criminal law; and
- participating in the development and implementation of corporate plans and the setting of the direction for the Office as a member of the senior management team.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications:

- 1) hold a degree in any discipline of at least 2:1 standard;

AND

- 2) be a solicitor able to practise in Northern Ireland;

AND

- 3) have at least 7 years experience of - (i) advising on significant legal issues; and (ii) doing so in a complex environment.

SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

In addition applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to interview, the following shortlisting criteria will be applied sequentially:

- 1) Be able to demonstrate evidence of high quality continuing professional development since graduation;
- 2) A proven track record of influencing and negotiating with experienced legal professionals, including Queen's Counsel.

NB: Candidates must demonstrate in the application form evidence of the above Eligibility criterion 3 and all Shortlisting criteria by way of examples and dates.

Please note:

- You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.
- It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.
- The panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.
- If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.
- ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post.
- The panel may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information available, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability.
- Further information on the Professional Skills for Government framework as it applies to this post can be obtained by accessing <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/people/psg/psg-identifier/PSG-skills-identifier.aspx>

NB: These should be considered within the specific context of the requirements for this post.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Northern Ireland Civil Service has adopted the Professional Skills for Government as a framework for the purpose of personal and professional development

What is the PSG competency framework?

The Professional Skills for Government (PSG) competency framework is a structured way of thinking about jobs and careers for Civil Service staff at all grades. It sets out the skills you need to do your job well as a member of the Civil Service, no matter what grade you are or where you work.

How does the PSG framework look?

The PSG competency framework is divided into the following separate but supporting areas:

1. **Leadership** - Civil Service leadership qualities sit at the centre of the framework. These are to:
 - provide direction for the organisation
 - deliver results
 - build capacity for the organisation to address current and future challenges
 - act with integrity
2. **Core skills** - Every civil servant needs certain core skills to work effectively. At Senior Civil Service level the core skills are:
 - people management - evidence of developing team capability in line with the business plan and organisational vision; managing change effectively and promoting best practice
 - financial management – evidence of planning, agreeing and monitoring the delivery of financial targets, and of identifying and implementing innovative ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources and assets
 - analysis and use of evidence – evidence of ensuring that the evidence base for the strategy and work of the organisation is open to critical challenge and inspires the confidence of stakeholders
 - programme and project management – evidence of responsibility for the definition and successful delivery of programme/project benefits, managing risks and communicating effectively with stakeholders
 - strategic thinking – evidence of influencing the organisation's strategy and priorities, and managing the tensions arising from conflicting organisational priorities, wider policy environment and operational constraints

- communications and marketing – evidence of aligning policy and delivery with clear communications objectives, taking into account the wider organisational communications agenda

3. Professional skills

- Job-specific professional skills are related to the work you do. Everyone in the Civil Service requires some professional skills to do their job, whether they work in policy development, operational delivery or corporate services, or provide expert advice (for example, scientists, economists and communicators). This area of the PSG competency framework is supported by Heads of Profession, who set standards for all professions in the Civil Service.

Further information on the Professional Skills for Government framework as it applies to this post can be obtained by accessing

<http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/people/psg/psg-identifier/PSG-skills-identifier.aspx>

This link will take you directly to the Professional Skills for Government skills identifier tool.

Step 1

Please click on Leadership – select your grade

Then click on grade 6, 7 or SCS

The leadership qualities required for this grade will then be displayed.

Please click on PSG skills identifier home.

Step 2

Please click on Core Skills – select your grade

Then click on Deputy Director (SCS pay band 1)

The core skills required for this grade will then be displayed.

Please click on PSG skills identifier home.

Step 3

Please click on Professional Skills – select your profession

Then click on Lawyers

Please then download the skills framework for Lawyers profession which will appear as a PDF file.

NB: These should be considered within the specific context of the requirements for this post.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process will be in 2 parts, with an analysis and presentation exercise immediately followed by a competence-based interview.

ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION EXERCISE (30% of total available score)

As part of the selection process, immediately prior to interview applicants will be required to undertake an exercise involving a scenario case study. The case study exercise is completed on an individual basis. Applicants will be required to read the case study and prepare an answer to the question(s), which will be outlined in the instruction booklet.

The time allocated for the preparation of this task will be 45 minutes. Applicants will then be required to present their answers orally and take questions from the panel. In total this section should last no longer than 20 minutes, at the beginning of the interview.

A pen and paper will be available in the pre-interview preparation room. No personal documentation may be brought in to this room. The only materials candidates will be permitted to bring into interview will be the written material prepared in the pre-interview room.

The scenario case study will be used to contribute to the assessment of several key competences/assessment criteria, namely, Professional Skills, Strategic Thinking, Analysis and Use of Evidence and Communications and Marketing competences (full definitions of each criterion are listed below).

KEY COMPETENCES/ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The key competences/assessment criteria to be assessed at interview or through the analysis and presentation exercise are as follows: -

1. Professional Skills (30% of total available score)

Evidence of sound legal knowledge in areas of legal practice relevant to the work of the Attorney General; evidence of skill in the conduct of significant litigation; evidence of giving high quality legal advice and translating legal knowledge for both a legal and a lay audience; evidence of skill in advocacy and negotiation.

2. Analysis and Use of Evidence (This criterion will be assessed solely through the analysis and presentation exercise)

Evidence of working guided and informed by research and robust analysis of information provided by clients and others; liaising effectively with clients and other stakeholders to manage the quality and completeness of the evidence base.

3. Communications & Marketing

Evidence of identifying and sharing information on issues affecting clients and other stakeholders in a manner that is readily understood by those within the legal profession and without.

4. People Management

Evidence of achieving organisational aims through the engagement and leadership of people, influencing clients and other stakeholders.

5. Strategic Thinking

Evidence of strategic awareness and contributing to the development of strategy, policy or priorities and identifying risks and difficulties that have to be managed.

6. Programme and Project Management

Evidence of effective project planning in relation to legislative or other projects/programmes of work, ensuring that effective stakeholder communication takes place.

7. Leadership

Evidence of acting with integrity, providing direction, delivering results and building capacity to address current and future challenges; and building effective working relationships with stakeholders.

8. Financial Management

Evidence of implementing innovative ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources and assets.

PASS MARK

The overall pass mark for the competition will be 120 out of a possible 200 (60%). Within this overall pass mark, a minimum individual pass mark of 36 out of 60 (60%) must also be obtained against both the Analysis and Presentation exercise and the Professional Skills criterion.

COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS

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

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Belfast during week commencing 5th July 2010.

INTERVIEW GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

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

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

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

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

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

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

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

SELECTION PROCESS

The Merit Principle

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

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

Making your application:

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

Guidance for Applicants

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline;
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.

Application Form Submission

- We will not accept incomplete application forms, application forms received after the closing deadline or reformatted application forms.
- Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to HRConnect.
- We will not accept any application where we are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, all requests for hard copy application packs are welcomed and all applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.

Changes in personal circumstances

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances.

Applicants Employed in the NICS/NIO

Please note:

HRConnect adheres to CSC 7/04 (ICSC 6/04) (PSN 128/04) regarding sickness absence. Applicants employed in the NICS/NIO within the past two years in a permanent or temporary capacity should familiarise themselves with its content as it may affect your eligibility to apply. CSC 7/04 (ICSC 6/04) (PSN 128/04) is available from your present/former HR department.

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.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

Please note, this form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it will result in disqualification.

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to page 22.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit

Interview/Assessment Information

It is HRConnect policy that all candidates invited to attend for interview/assessment bring sufficient documentation to satisfy the eligibility/shortlisting criteria and the Nationality and Vetting requirements. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for interview/assessment.

You should ensure that these documents are readily available.

Nationality Requirements

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. The Solicitor to the Attorney General for Northern Ireland post is classified as Non-Public Service, therefore certain nationality requirements apply. Applicants must be either:

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

For further guidance on Nationality requirements please see Annex A.

Advice on Nationality for (i), (ii) and (iii) above may be obtained from the Home Office website, www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Vetting Procedures

For Solicitor to the Attorney General for Northern Ireland post in the NICS/NIO the level of vetting is Security Check (SC) which will include:

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

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

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

Standard Disclosure Certificate

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

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.

Order of Merit

The selection panel will assess candidates against the interview/assessment criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The selection panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed. The order of merit is valid for one year.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Pensions:

New entrants who join the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) are eligible to join the NICS pension scheme, the (PCSPS (NI)) – NUVOS arrangement. Pension is an important part of the reward package for civil servants and, on average, employers pay more than 18% of pay towards pension costs. As well as providing you with an easy and secure way to help you provide for your retirement, the PCSPS (NI) also provides dependants and ill health benefits.

We offer all new employees the choice of either:

- Nuvos - a high quality, index-linked defined benefit pension scheme that currently has a 3.5% member contribution rate. Your employing Department also makes contributions; or
- Partnership in a stakeholder type money purchase arrangement with an employer contribution. The employer basic contribution is based on your age, and this is paid regardless of whether you choose to contribute. You do not have to contribute if you do not wish to, but if you do your employing Department will match your contributions up to an additional 3% of pay. Your employing Department will also pay a further contribution, of 0.8% of pay, to the PCSPS (NI) to cover you for Death in Service benefits.

If you previously worked for an employer covered by the PCSPS (NI) arrangements, different conditions may apply. If you already have a PCSPS (NI) pension in payment, you should be aware that the pension scheme rules prevent members from receiving more by way of pay and pension combined on re-employment than they were earning as salary before they retired. This is called “abatement”. If you want to know more about how this may affect you, please contact Civil Service Pensions at:

Waterside House,
75 Duke Street,
Londonderry,
BT47 6FP;
Tel: 028 7131 9000;
Email: cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk

If you left the NICS with an early retirement, severance or redundancy package then your existing benefits may be affected if you accept this post. If your service was enhanced (increased) when you left then you will not be able to build up benefits in the defined benefit scheme during the period that is covered by the enhancement included in your existing benefits. If you opt to join the Partnership arrangement, employer contributions will not be payable for this enhancement period but you will be able to contribute if you wish. If you are receiving a pension or annual compensation payment then this may be reduced during your re-employment. If you received a top-up payment

under the early severance temporary arrangements then your pay may be reduced during your re-employment. If you want to know more about this, please contact Civil Service Pensions.

You may be able to transfer a pension with your current or a previous employer into the PCSPS (NI). Information on Transfers In can be found in the New Entrant Pack which you should receive on taking up employment.

Feedback

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

THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Please return completed form to:

HRConnect Recruitment Team

Post: HRConnect
PO Box 1089
2nd Floor
The Metro Building
6-9 Donegall Square South
Belfast
BT1 9EW
Tel: 0800 1 300 330

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Policy Statement

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equal Opportunities Policy statement is set out below.

“The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is committed to providing equality of opportunity. It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the NICS on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which all workers are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated. This right is protected in many instances by legislation.

In order to provide a high quality service to the people of Northern Ireland the NICS needs to recruit, retain and promote the best available people. Our equal opportunities policy is central to this strategy. We aim to foster a culture which encourages every member of staff to develop his or her full potential and which rewards achievement. Creating a working environment where individual differences are valued and respected enables all staff to give of their best and helps us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve.

The NICS seeks to maintain the confidence of the whole community. It will continue to promote equality of opportunity and fair participation within the framework of the law and will strive to achieve a workforce that is broadly representative of the society which it serves.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to apply this policy. Both Management and Trade Union Side are fully committed to the policy and will endeavour to ensure its full implementation.”

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Equality monitoring is the process of collecting, storing and analysing information that is relevant to and necessary for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity between different categories of persons. This section sets out what information is collected, the reasons for doing so and what it is used for.

You should note that the Monitoring Form is regarded as part of your application and failure to fully complete and return it will result in disqualification. The Monitoring Form will be processed separately and neither the form nor the details contained in it will be available to those considering your application.

Legislative Context

This section explains the reasons for gathering this information by setting out the legislative background.

Gender

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended) makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of his or her sex. Information on gender is also necessary to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return, as required by the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between men and women generally.

Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 make it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on grounds of age. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different age.

Community Background

The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 outlaws discrimination on the basis of religious belief or political opinion. The information requested in the Community Background section of the monitoring form is required in connection with the requirements of the above Order and to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission for NI.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief and political opinion. Following guidance issued in July 2007 by the Equality Commission for NI the NICS has decided to use “community background” information as a proxy for political opinion.

Race

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial group.

Disability

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) provides protection for disabled persons against discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The DDA defines disability as a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

This definition is interpreted as follows:-

Physical Impairment: this includes, for instance, a weakening of part of the body (eyes, ears, limbs, internal organs etc) caused through illness by accident or from birth. Examples would be blindness, deafness, paralysis of a leg or heart disease.

Mental Impairment: this includes mental ill health and what is commonly known as learning disability.

Substantial: put simply, this means the effect of the physical or mental impairment on ability to carry out normal day to day activities is more than minor or trivial. It does not have to be a severe effect.

Long-term adverse effect: the effect has to have lasted or be likely to last overall for at least 12 months and the effect must be a detrimental one. A person with a life expectancy of less than 12 months is of course covered if the effect is likely to last for the whole of that time.

A normal day to day activity: this is something which is carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis such as washing, eating, catching a bus or turning on a television. It does not mean something so individual as playing a musical instrument to a professional standard or doing everything involved in a particular job.

What sort of effect must there be?

The person must be affected in at least one of the respects listed in the DDA: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech; hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; or perception of risk of physical danger.

What happens if the effects are reduced by medication or other treatment?

Broadly speaking, the effects that matter are those that would be present if there was no medication or treatment taking place. The exception is people who wear spectacles or contact lenses when what matters is the effect that remain while the spectacles or contact lenses are being used.

Are there any types of condition covered by special provisions in the DDA?

Yes, because some people with particular conditions might not otherwise be counted as disabled. These are provisions covering:

Recurring or fluctuating conditions such as arthritis, where the effects can sometimes be less than substantial, which are treated as continuing to have a substantial adverse effect so long as that effect is likely to recur;

Conditions which progressively deteriorate, such as motor neuron disease, which count as having a substantial effect from the first time they have any

effect at all on ability to carry out normal day to day activities even if it is not substantial, so long as there is eventually likely to be a substantial adverse effect; and

People with cancer, HIV, or multiple sclerosis are deemed to be disabled people from the point of diagnosis, regardless of whether or not they have any symptoms.

Are any conditions not covered?

Yes, the following conditions specifically do not count as impairments:

Addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless resulting from the substance being medically prescribed);

Seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hay fever) unless it aggravates the effect of another condition;

Tendency to set fires, or steal, or physically or sexually abuse other persons;

Exhibitionism and voyeurism;

Severe disfigurements consisting of tattoos, non-medical body piercing or attachments to such piercing are not treated as having substantial adverse effects.

What if someone has recovered from a disability?

Much of the DDA also applies to people who have had a disability in the past (for example, someone who was disabled by mental ill health) but have now fully recovered. People who were registered disabled under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (NI) 1945 both on 12 January 1995 and 2 December 1996 will be regarded as having had a disability in the past if they do not in any case fall within the definition of the DDA.

Race

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial group.

Sexual Orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) Order 2003 makes it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. In order to monitor the effectiveness of NICS policies information is gathered on sexual orientation. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different sexual orientation.

Marital Status & Dependants

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different marital status and between persons with dependants and persons without.

Use of Monitoring Information

Monitoring information is used to enable the NICS to assess the effectiveness of its EO policies and to determine the impact (if any) of various policies and procedures on different categories of staff. In addition to this internal focus community background and gender information on both staff and applicants is used to complete the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission.

Confidentiality of Monitoring Information

As with other forms of personal data, the obtaining, use, storage and disclosure of monitoring information is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). Monitoring information is held on computer and is protected by a high level of security. Access to this data is restricted to those NICS staff, employees of HRConnect and Trade Union officials whose duties make it necessary for them to have it. Misuse of monitoring information is viewed as a disciplinary offence.

The confidentiality of community background information is also protected through regulations made under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (FETO). These make it a criminal offence, subject to specific exceptions, for an employer or employee to disclose information on the community background of an individual which has been obtained or used for the purposes of monitoring under FETO.

The release of an individual's monitoring information is permitted by legislation as part of prospective or actual proceedings under equality legislation, e.g. where another individual has made a complaint of alleged discrimination.

Many people from all backgrounds in Northern Ireland and beyond are interested in the profile of the NICS workforce and the candidates who apply for jobs. For this reason the NICS regularly publishes data in the form of statistical summaries, graphs etc. On occasions it may also be necessary to use monitoring information to answer questions from Assembly Members, MPs and MEPs or to respond to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act. In all cases where information is made public, the format of presentation will be such that it will not be possible to identify any individual's information.

ANNEX A

Nationality

(i) 'UK National' means a person who is a British citizen (including persons from the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man), a British subject under Part IV of the British Nationality Act 1981 having the right of abode in the UK or a British Dependent Territories citizen acquiring his/her citizenship from connection with Gibraltar.

(ii) 'Commonwealth Citizen' means any person who has the status of a Commonwealth citizen under the British Nationality Act 1981, not covered by the 'UK Nationality' definition above. This includes British Dependent Territories citizens (other than Gibraltarians), British Overseas citizens, and from 1986 those persons in the category British National (Overseas).

(iii) 'British Protected Person' means a member of any class of persons declared to be British Protected Persons by Order in Council under the British Nationality Act 1981, or by virtue of the Solomon Islands Act 1978.

(iv) 'EEA National' means a national of one of the following countries:

Austria	France	Liechtenstein	**Romania
Belgium	Germany	Lithuania	Slovakia
**Bulgaria	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Cyprus	Hungary	Malta	Spain
Czech Republic	Iceland	Netherlands	Sweden
Denmark	Ireland	Norway	United Kingdom
Estonia	Italy	Poland	
Finland	Latvia	Portugal	

N.B. nationals from Switzerland also have the same free movement and employment rights.

'Family member of an EEA national' means:

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

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

** Non-exempt Bulgarian and Romanian nationals are required to be registered under the Worker Authorisation Scheme prior to appointment. Guidance on this can be obtained from the Home Office website www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

ANNEX B

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

CSC NI
**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

AN INTRODUCTION

Ensuring appointment on merit
And safeguarding ethics

WHO ARE WE?

Brenda McLaughlin, CBE (Chairperson)
Ruth Laird
Tony Hopkins, CBE
Vilma Patterson, MBE
Dr Raymond Mullan, OBE

LOCATION

Our Office is in Windsor House.
The full address is:

5th Floor
Windsor House
Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7SR

OPENING HOURS

The Office is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm,
Monday to Friday, except Public and Bank Holidays.

How to contact us

- write to us at the address at the top of the page
- telephone us on **028 9054 9151**
- fax us at **028 9054 9414**
- visit us at www.nicscommissioners.org

Annex B CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

WHAT ARE WE HERE TO DO?

Civil Service Commissioners are appointed by the Crown to uphold the principle that selection for appointment to posts in the Civil Service should be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

WHERE DO WE GET OUR AUTHORITY FROM?

Commissioners derived their responsibilities from prerogative Orders made by the Secretary of State. Our authority currently derives from the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

We do it by:

- making General Regulations.
- publishing and maintaining a Recruitment Code setting out the essential principles and procedures on which recruitment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service must be based. Departments and Agencies must follow this Code. A copy is available online at: www.nicscommissioners.org
- it is inevitable that occasions will arise when special circumstances lead to Departments needing to depart from the Merit Principle. The Commissioners have set out the circumstances in which they are prepared to look at requests to depart from the Merit Principle. These 'exceptions' must be notified to, and in some instances approved by, the Commissioners before an appointment can be made.
- auditing recruitment policies and practices followed by Departments and Agencies in making appointment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Each year, the Commissioners decide on a particular aspect of recruitment to examine in detail (an audit) and request management consultants to carry out independent investigations on their behalf. The results of these audits are published in the Commissioners' Annual Report.
- requiring Departments and Agencies to publish information about their recruitment activity.

- approving procedures for appointment, through open competition, to the Senior Civil Service in Northern Ireland.
- hearing and determining appeals under the Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics. Under the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999, we have been assigned the role of providing an independent appeals mechanism for Northern Ireland civil servants. The Code of Ethics sets out the constitutional framework within which civil servants work and the values they are expected to uphold. Details of the number and nature of the appeals received by the Commissioners are published each year in our Annual Report.

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

If you have ever applied for a post in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, you can be assured that, whether or not you were successful, the Department or Agency was obliged to make that appointment in accordance with directions for good practice set out by the Commissioners.

We are concerned that civil servants are not fully aware of the appeals mechanism under the Code of Ethics. We would strongly encourage any civil servant who believes that he or she has been asked to act in a way which

- is illegal, improper or unethical;
- is in breach of constitutional convention or a professional code;
- may involve a possible maladministration; or
- is otherwise inconsistent with the Code

to report the matter in accordance with procedures laid down in the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pay and Conditions Code or Departmental guidance.

Where the matter has been reported in the appropriate manner and a civil servant believes the response does not represent a reasonable response to his or her concerns, s/he may report the matter in writing to the Civil Service Commissioners.

**Candidate
Information
Booklet**

IRC67765

**Office of the Attorney General for
Northern Ireland**

**Division Head – Office of the Attorney
General for Northern Ireland (2 posts)**

**Completed Application Forms
must be returned to HRConnect
no later than 12 noon (UK time)
on
Friday 18th June 2010**

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BACKGROUND

On devolution of justice, the arrangement whereby the Attorney General for England and Wales is also Attorney General for Northern Ireland comes to an end. The Justice (NI) Act 2002 provides for the appointment of an independent, non-political Attorney General for Northern Ireland. The Attorney General has a range of statutory and non-statutory responsibilities including as chief legal adviser to the Executive.

The Attorney General's Office will deal with the most important and complex legal matters facing the Executive and Departments, providing advice and where necessary conducting litigation. The establishment of a statutorily independent Attorney General marks a significant change in how the top end of government legal services is organised and delivered in Northern Ireland, and puts the rule of law at the very heart of government.

The Attorney has responsibility for referring any Assembly legislation, where there is doubt about its vires, to the UK Supreme Court, and is a notice party in devolution litigation. Statute provides that the Attorney General for Northern Ireland may participate in the proceedings of the Assembly to the extent permitted by its standing orders but he may not vote in the Assembly.

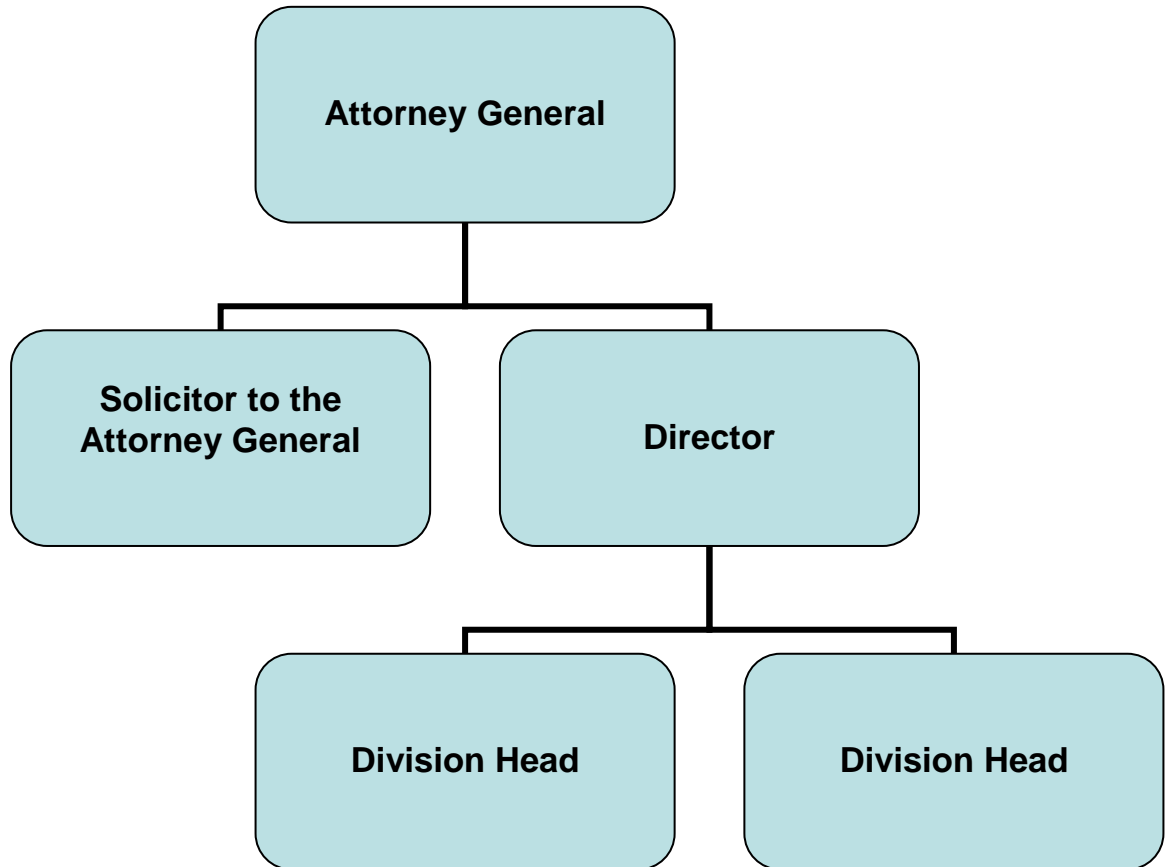
To guarantee the independence of the Attorney, his Office will have an arm's length relationship with the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM). Staff will have civil service terms and conditions.

At the core of the Office will be a legal secretariat responsible for providing advice on the most important and complex matters facing the Executive and Ministers.

Other responsibilities of the Attorney include representing the public interest in charity matters; ordering fresh inquests; and issuing human rights guidance to criminal justice organisations.

TOP LEVEL ORGANISATIONAL CHART

Office of the Attorney General (NI)



The Solicitor, Director and Division Heads are all equivalent to Senior Civil Service Grade 5

JOB DESCRIPTION

These are 2 permanent full-time appointments for Grade 5 within the Senior Civil Service (SCS).

The successful candidates will be employed in the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland.

Each Division Head will be responsible for matters referred from half of the Northern Ireland Departments, albeit with some flexibility dependent on caseloads. Duties on matters such as human rights, charities, international and European Union issues will be allocated between the Division Heads on the direction of the Attorney or the Director.

The post holder will regularly make very significant contributions, through advice given, to the formulation of Executive and Departmental policies and to Ministerial decision-making with the greatest cost, impact and political considerations. Each Division Head will often be working on highly visible issues and politically sensitive events where law and politics coincide; all will be complex and multifaceted, involving thorough research and analysis to produce a robust answer, which will require political sensitivity. Advice will be required on litigation test cases, the ramifications of which may impact across a wide part of the public and private sectors.

Many of the topics on which advice is sought will have European Convention on Human Rights / European Union dimensions.

During consultation on statutory human rights advice the post holder will engage directly with senior figures in human rights organisations, the voluntary and community sector and statutory organisations in explaining the approach taken, responding to criticism and considering representations received.

The post holder's responsibilities will include giving final advice to the Attorney on the certification that proposed legislation is within the competence of the

Northern Ireland Assembly including compliance within the European Convention on Human Rights and Community law.

The post holder will need to provide advice at short notice on any legal implications of papers being considered by the Executive.

The post holder will have regular responsibilities in relation to contentious and highly complex and urgent judicial review cases including settling affidavits, assembling instructions to Counsel, and instructing Counsel at hearings. Potentially, as Bar rules change, the post holder may appear personally as an advocate in significant cases including judicial reviews and major aspects of litigation, whether before domestic courts or international tribunals.

Decisions will often be required at very short notice - the leave, substantive hearing and appeal stages of an urgent judicial review can happen within a matter of hours or days - but even when there is considerable time pressure the quality of advice and representation must be maintained.

In the establishment phase of the Office the person appointed will need, leading by example, to foster an approach consistent with the desired culture of the Office. The post holder will make a vital contribution to the development of a dedicated team capable of responding to the complex range of demands to which the Office will respond. It will be important to encourage open communication and flexibility within the legal team and the wider Office, as projects will often call for a variety of specialisms and approaches. The post holder will motivate the team through the challenges of the establishment period and taking the office forward.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The main duties for each Division Head will be:

- consultations with Departments and Departmental Solicitors Office;
- prepare and account for advice to Departments and the Executive on the most important and complex legal issues facing government;
- lead their teams to ensure the highest standards in legal research, analysis and advice;
- supervise the preparation of statutory guidance on human rights and the exercise of the Attorney General's responsibilities as guardian of the public interest in charity matters;
- participate, as required, in the litigation demands of the Office;
- leading the examination of legislation to ensure its vires;
- as a member of the senior management team, influence corporate thinking and planning and provide leadership in the critical establishment period of the Attorney's Office.

While the number of people managed by the post holder will be small, the post holder will be working closely with other able lawyers. An emphasis on teamwork and joint contribution to projects will be critical given the highly complex and multi-faceted nature of the work undertaken by the Office.

The post holder will organise the work of their team to best match resources and requirements; examine incoming work and assign it according to skills of team members and the complexity of issues; and deal with staffing issues including sitting on recruitment panels as required.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

SALARY

The salary for these posts will be within the range £57,300 to £116,000 (under review) within which pay progression will be performance related. Starting salary is normally the minimum of the payscale; however a higher starting salary may be available where it is considered that this is appropriate, for example where a successful applicant has additional relevant experience and/or qualifications. If the successful candidates are existing civil servants, normal regrading terms will apply.

LOCATION

The postholder will be based initially in Lesley House, 25 Wellington Place, Belfast, BT1 6GD. It is envisaged that the permanent location will also be in Belfast City Centre.

TRAVEL

Although based in Belfast, the postholder may be expected to travel throughout Northern Ireland, as well as nationally and occasionally internationally as required.

WORKING HOURS

In common with all SCS appointments, the postholder will be required to work outside their normal conditioned hours, where it is necessary, to fulfil the demands of the post.

HOLIDAYS

In addition to the statutory holidays, the annual leave entitlement is 30 days.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications:

- 4) hold a degree in any discipline of at least 2:1 standard;

AND

- 5) be a barrister or solicitor able to practise in Northern Ireland;

AND

- 6) have at least 7 years experience of - (i) advising on significant legal issues; and (ii) doing so in a complex environment.

SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

In addition applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to interview, the following shortlisting criteria will be applied sequentially:

- 1) Evidence of high quality continuing professional development since graduation;
- 2) Evidence of significant experience in advocacy AND negotiation.

NB: Candidates must demonstrate in the application form evidence of the above eligibility criteria and both shortlisting criteria by way of examples and dates.

Please note:

- You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.
- It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.
- The panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.
- If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.
- ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post.
- The panel may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information available, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability.

- Further information on the Professional Skills for Government framework as it applies to this post can be obtained by accessing <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/people/psg/psg-identifier/PSG-skills-identifier.aspx>

NB: These should be considered within the specific context of the requirements for this post.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Northern Ireland Civil Service has adopted the Professional Skills for Government as a framework for the purpose of personal and professional development.

What is the PSG competency framework?

The Professional Skills for Government (PSG) competency framework is a structured way of thinking about jobs and careers for Civil Service staff at all grades. It sets out the skills you need to do your job well as a member of the Civil Service, no matter what grade you are or where you work.

How does the PSG framework look?

The PSG competency framework is divided into the following separate but supporting areas:

2. **Leadership** - Civil Service leadership qualities sit at the centre of the framework. These are to:
 - provide direction for the organisation
 - deliver results
 - build capacity for the organisation to address current and future challenges
 - act with integrity
2. **Core skills** - Every civil servant needs certain core skills to work effectively. At Senior Civil Service level the core skills are:
 - people management - evidence of developing team capability in line with the business plan and organisational vision; managing change effectively and promoting best practice
 - financial management – evidence of planning, agreeing and monitoring the delivery of financial targets, and of identifying and implementing innovative ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources and assets
 - analysis and use of evidence – evidence of ensuring that the evidence base for the strategy and work of the organisation is open to critical challenge and inspires the confidence of stakeholders
 - programme and project management – evidence of responsibility for the definition and successful delivery of programme/project benefits, managing risks and communicating effectively with stakeholders
 - strategic thinking – evidence of influencing the organisation's strategy and priorities, and managing the tensions arising from conflicting organisational priorities, wider policy environment and operational constraints

- communications and marketing – evidence of aligning policy and delivery with clear communications objectives, taking into account the wider organisational communications agenda

NB: These should be considered within the specific context of the requirements for this post – see pages 13 & 14.

3. Professional skills

- Job-specific professional skills are related to the work you do. Everyone in the Civil Service requires some professional skills to do their job, whether they work in policy development, operational delivery or corporate services, or provide expert advice (for example, scientists, economists and communicators). This area of the PSG competency framework is supported by Heads of Profession, who set standards for all professions in the Civil Service.

Further information on the Professional Skills for Government framework as it applies to this post can be obtained by accessing

<http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/people/psg/psg-identifier/PSG-skills-identifier.aspx>

This link will take you directly to the Professional Skills for Government skills identifier tool.

Step 1

Please click on Leadership – select your grade

Then click on grade 6, 7 or SCS

The leadership qualities required for this grade will then be displayed.

Please click on PSG skills identifier home.

Step 2

Please click on Core Skills – select your grade

Then click on Deputy Director (SCS pay band 1)

The core skills required for this grade will then be displayed.

Please click on PSG skills identifier home.

Step 3

Please click on Professional Skills – select your profession

Then click on Lawyers

Please then download the skills framework for Lawyers profession which will appear as a PDF file.

NB: These should be considered within the specific context of the requirements for this post.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process will be in 2 parts, with an analysis and presentation exercise immediately followed by a competence-based interview.

ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION EXERCISE *(30% of total available score)*

As part of the selection process, immediately prior to interview applicants will be required to undertake an exercise involving a scenario case study. The case study exercise is completed on an individual basis. Applicants will be required to read the case study and prepare an answer to the question(s), which will be outlined in the instruction booklet.

The time allocated for the preparation of this task will be 45 minutes. Applicants will then be required to present their answers orally for 15 minutes and take questions from the panel for 5 minutes at the beginning of the interview.

A pen and paper will be available in the pre-interview preparation room. No personal documentation may be brought in to this room. The only materials candidates will be permitted to bring into interview will be the written material prepared in the pre-interview room.

The scenario case study will be used to contribute to the assessment of several key competences/assessment criteria, namely, Professional Skills, Analysis and Use of Evidence and Communications and Marketing competences (full definitions of each criterion are listed below).

KEY COMPETENCES/ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The key competences/assessment criteria to be assessed at interview or through the analysis and presentation exercise are as follows: -

1. Professional Skills *(30% of total available score)*

Evidence of sound legal knowledge in areas of legal practice relevant to the work of the Attorney General; evidence of giving high quality legal advice and translating legal knowledge for both a legal and a lay audience; evidence of skill in advocacy and negotiation.

2. Analysis and Use of Evidence (This criterion will be assessed solely through the analysis and presentation exercise)

Evidence of working guided and informed by research and robust analysis of information provided by clients and others; liaising effectively with clients and other stakeholders to manage the quality and completeness of the evidence base.

3. Communications & Marketing

Evidence of identifying and sharing information on issues affecting clients and other stakeholders in a manner that is readily understood by those within the legal profession and without.

4. People Management

Evidence of achieving organisational aims through the engagement and leadership of people, influencing clients and other stakeholders.

5. Strategic Thinking

Evidence of strategic awareness and contributing to the development of strategy, policy or priorities and identifying risks and difficulties that have to be managed.

6. Programme and Project Management

Evidence of effective project planning in relation to legislative or other projects/programmes of work, ensuring that effective stakeholder communication takes place.

7. Leadership

Evidence of acting with integrity, providing direction, delivering results and building capacity to address current and future challenges; and building effective working relationships with stakeholders.

8. Financial Management

Evidence of implementing innovative ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources and assets.

PASS MARK

The overall pass mark for the competition will be 120 out of a possible 200 (60%). Within this overall pass mark, a minimum individual pass mark of 36 out of 60 (60%) must also be obtained against both the Analysis and Presentation exercise and the Professional Skills criterion.

COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS

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

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Belfast during week commencing 19th July 2010.

INTERVIEW GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

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

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

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

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

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

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

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

The Merit Principle

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

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

Making your application:

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

Guidance for Applicants

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline;
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write “I” statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.

Application Form Submission

- We will not accept incomplete application forms, application forms received after the closing deadline or reformatted application forms.
- Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to HRConnect.
- We will not accept any application where we are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, all requests for hard copy application packs are welcomed and all applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.

Changes in personal circumstances

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances.

Applicants Employed in the NICS/NIO

Please note:

HRConnect adheres to CSC 7/04 (ICSC 6/04) (PSN 128/04) regarding sickness absence. Applicants employed in the NICS/NIO within the past two years in a permanent or temporary capacity should familiarise themselves

with its content as it may affect your eligibility to apply. CSC 7/04 (ICSC 6/04) (PSN 128/04) is available from your present/former HR department.

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.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

Please note, this form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it will result in disqualification.

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to page 22.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.

Interview/Assessment Information

It is HRConnect policy that all candidates invited to attend for interview/assessment bring sufficient documentation to satisfy the eligibility/shortlisting criteria and the Nationality and Vetting requirements. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for interview/assessment.

You should ensure that these documents are readily available.

Nationality Requirements

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. The Division Head posts are classified as Non-Public Service, therefore certain nationality requirements apply. Applicants must be either:

- (vii) A UK national; or
- (viii) A Commonwealth citizen; or
- (ix) A British Protected Person; or
- (x) An EEA national; or
- (xi) A Swiss National; or
- (xii) A person who is not an EEA or Swiss national, but is a family member of an EEA national who has moved to the UK from another EEA Member State for an approved purpose.

For further guidance on Nationality requirements please see Annex A.

Advice on Nationality for (i), (ii) and (iii) above may be obtained from the Home Office website, www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Vetting Procedures

For Division Head posts in the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland the level of vetting is Security Check (SC) which will include:

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

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

- e) Your passport OR
- f) 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).
- g) Other acceptable documents are listed on www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.
- h) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

Standard Disclosure Certificate

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

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.

Order of Merit

The selection panel will assess candidates against the interview/assessment criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The selection panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed. The order of merit is valid for one year.

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

GENERAL INFORMATION

Pensions:

New entrants who join the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) are eligible to join the NICS pension scheme, the (PCSPS (NI)) – NUVOS arrangement. Pension is an important part of the reward package for civil servants and, on average, employers pay more than 18% of pay towards pension costs. As well as providing you with an easy and secure way to help you provide for your retirement, the PCSPS (NI) also provides dependants and ill health benefits.

We offer all new employees the choice of either:

- Nuvos - a high quality, index-linked defined benefit pension scheme that currently has a 3.5% member contribution rate. Your employing Department also makes contributions; or
- Partnership in a stakeholder type money purchase arrangement with an employer contribution. The employer basic contribution is based on your age, and this is paid regardless of whether you choose to contribute. You do not have to contribute if you do not wish to, but if you do your employing Department will match your contributions up to an additional 3% of pay. Your employing Department will also pay a further contribution, of 0.8% of pay, to the PCSPS (NI) to cover you for Death in Service benefits.

If you previously worked for an employer covered by the PCSPS (NI) arrangements, different conditions may apply. If you already have a PCSPS (NI) pension in payment, you should be aware that the pension scheme rules prevent members from receiving more by way of pay and pension combined on re-employment than they were earning as salary before they retired. This is called “abatement”. If you want to know more about how this may affect you, please contact Civil Service Pensions at:

Waterside House,
75 Duke Street,
Londonderry,
BT47 6FP;
Tel: 028 7131 9000;
Email: cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk

If you left the NICS with an early retirement, severance or redundancy package then your existing benefits may be affected if you accept this post. If your service was enhanced (increased) when you left then you will not be able to build up benefits in the defined benefit scheme during the period that is covered by the enhancement included in your existing benefits. If you opt to join the Partnership arrangement, employer contributions will not be payable for this enhancement period but you will be able to contribute if you wish. If you are receiving a pension or annual compensation payment then this may be reduced during your re-employment. If you received a top-up payment

under the early severance temporary arrangements then your pay may be reduced during your re-employment. If you want to know more about this, please contact Civil Service Pensions.

You may be able to transfer a pension with your current or a previous employer into the PCSPS (NI). Information on Transfers In can be found in the New Entrant Pack which you should receive on taking up employment.

Feedback

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

THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Please return completed form to:

HRConnect Recruitment Team

Post: HRConnect
PO Box 1089
2nd Floor
The Metro Building
6-9 Donegall Square South
Belfast
BT1 9EW
Tel: 0800 1 300 330

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Policy Statement

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equal Opportunities Policy statement is set out below.

“The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is committed to providing equality of opportunity. It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the NICS on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which all workers are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated. This right is protected in many instances by legislation.

In order to provide a high quality service to the people of Northern Ireland the NICS needs to recruit, retain and promote the best available people. Our equal opportunities policy is central to this strategy. We aim to foster a culture which encourages every member of staff to develop his or her full potential and which rewards achievement. Creating a working environment where individual differences are valued and respected enables all staff to give of their best and helps us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve.

The NICS seeks to maintain the confidence of the whole community. It will continue to promote equality of opportunity and fair participation within the framework of the law and will strive to achieve a workforce that is broadly representative of the society which it serves.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to apply this policy. Both Management and Trade Union Side are fully committed to the policy and will endeavour to ensure its full implementation.”

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Equality monitoring is the process of collecting, storing and analysing information that is relevant to and necessary for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity between different categories of persons. This section sets out what information is collected, the reasons for doing so and what it is used for.

You should note that the Monitoring Form is regarded as part of your application and failure to fully complete and return it will result in disqualification. The Monitoring Form will be processed separately and neither the form nor the details contained in it will be available to those considering your application.

Legislative Context

This section explains the reasons for gathering this information by setting out the legislative background.

Gender

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended) makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of his or her sex. Information on gender is also necessary to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return, as required by the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between men and women generally.

Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 make it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on grounds of age. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different age.

Community Background

The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 outlaws discrimination on the basis of religious belief or political opinion. The information requested in the Community Background section of the monitoring form is required in connection with the requirements of the above Order and to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission for NI.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief and political opinion. Following guidance issued in July 2007 by the Equality Commission for NI the NICS has decided to use “community background” information as a proxy for political opinion.

Race

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial group.

Disability

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) provides protection for disabled persons against discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The DDA defines disability as a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

This definition is interpreted as follows:-

Physical Impairment: this includes, for instance, a weakening of part of the body (eyes, ears, limbs, internal organs etc) caused through illness by accident or from birth. Examples would be blindness, deafness, paralysis of a leg or heart disease.

Mental Impairment: this includes mental ill health and what is commonly known as learning disability.

Substantial: put simply, this means the effect of the physical or mental impairment on ability to carry out normal day to day activities is more than minor or trivial. It does not have to be a severe effect.

Long-term adverse effect: the effect has to have lasted or be likely to last overall for at least 12 months and the effect must be a detrimental one. A person with a life expectancy of less than 12 months is of course covered if the effect is likely to last for the whole of that time.

A normal day to day activity: this is something which is carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis such as washing, eating, catching a bus or turning on a television. It does not mean something so individual as playing a musical instrument to a professional standard or doing everything involved in a particular job.

What sort of effect must there be?

The person must be affected in at least one of the respects listed in the DDA: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech; hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; or perception of risk of physical danger.

What happens if the effects are reduced by medication or other treatment?

Broadly speaking, the effects that matter are those that would be present if there was no medication or treatment taking place. The exception is people who wear spectacles or contact lenses when what matters is the effect that remain while the spectacles or contact lenses are being used.

Are there any types of condition covered by special provisions in the DDA?

Yes, because some people with particular conditions might not otherwise be counted as disabled. These are provisions covering:

Recurring or fluctuating conditions such as arthritis, where the effects can sometimes be less than substantial, which are treated as continuing to have a substantial adverse effect so long as that effect is likely to recur;

Conditions which progressively deteriorate, such as motor neuron disease, which count as having a substantial effect from the first time they have any

effect at all on ability to carry out normal day to day activities even if it is not substantial, so long as there is eventually likely to be a substantial adverse effect; and

People with cancer, HIV, or multiple sclerosis are deemed to be disabled people from the point of diagnosis, regardless of whether or not they have any symptoms.

Are any conditions not covered?

Yes, the following conditions specifically do not count as impairments:

Addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless resulting from the substance being medically prescribed);

Seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hay fever) unless it aggravates the effect of another condition;

Tendency to set fires, or steal, or physically or sexually abuse other persons;

Exhibitionism and voyeurism;

Severe disfigurements consisting of tattoos, non-medical body piercing or attachments to such piercing are not treated as having substantial adverse effects.

What if someone has recovered from a disability?

Much of the DDA also applies to people who have had a disability in the past (for example, someone who was disabled by mental ill health) but have now fully recovered. People who were registered disabled under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (NI) 1945 both on 12 January 1995 and 2 December 1996 will be regarded as having had a disability in the past if they do not in any case fall within the definition of the DDA.

Race

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial group.

Sexual Orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) Order 2003 makes it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. In order to monitor the effectiveness of NICS policies information is gathered on sexual orientation. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different sexual orientation.

Marital Status & Dependants

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different marital status and between persons with dependants and persons without.

Use of Monitoring Information

Monitoring information is used to enable the NICS to assess the effectiveness of its EO policies and to determine the impact (if any) of various policies and procedures on different categories of staff. In addition to this internal focus community background and gender information on both staff and applicants is used to complete the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission.

Confidentiality of Monitoring Information

As with other forms of personal data, the obtaining, use, storage and disclosure of monitoring information is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). Monitoring information is held on computer and is protected by a high level of security. Access to this data is restricted to those NICS staff, employees of HRConnect and Trade Union officials whose duties make it necessary for them to have it. Misuse of monitoring information is viewed as a disciplinary offence.

The confidentiality of community background information is also protected through regulations made under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (FETO). These make it a criminal offence, subject to specific exceptions, for an employer or employee to disclose information on the community background of an individual which has been obtained or used for the purposes of monitoring under FETO.

The release of an individual's monitoring information is permitted by legislation as part of prospective or actual proceedings under equality legislation, e.g. where another individual has made a complaint of alleged discrimination.

Many people from all backgrounds in Northern Ireland and beyond are interested in the profile of the NICS workforce and the candidates who apply for jobs. For this reason the NICS regularly publishes data in the form of statistical summaries, graphs etc. On occasions it may also be necessary to use monitoring information to answer questions from Assembly Members, MPs and MEPs or to respond to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act. In all cases where information is made public, the format of presentation will be such that it will not be possible to identify any individual's information.

ANNEX A

Nationality

(i) 'UK National' means a person who is a British citizen (including persons from the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man), a British subject under Part IV of the British Nationality Act 1981 having the right of abode in the UK or a British Dependent Territories citizen acquiring his/her citizenship from connection with Gibraltar.

(ii) 'Commonwealth Citizen' means any person who has the status of a Commonwealth citizen under the British Nationality Act 1981, not covered by the 'UK Nationality' definition above. This includes British Dependent Territories citizens (other than Gibraltarians), British Overseas citizens, and from 1986 those persons in the category British National (Overseas).

(iii) 'British Protected Person' means a member of any class of persons declared to be British Protected Persons by Order in Council under the British Nationality Act 1981, or by virtue of the Solomon Islands Act 1978.

(iv) 'EEA National' means a national of one of the following countries:

Austria	France	Liechtenstein	**Romania
Belgium	Germany	Lithuania	Slovakia
**Bulgaria	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Cyprus	Hungary	Malta	Spain
Czech Republic	Iceland	Netherlands	Sweden
Denmark	Ireland	Norway	United Kingdom
Estonia	Italy	Poland	
Finland	Latvia	Portugal	

N.B. nationals from Switzerland also have the same free movement and employment rights.

'Family member of an EEA national' means:

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

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

** Non-exempt Bulgarian and Romanian nationals are required to be registered under the Worker Authorisation Scheme prior to appointment. Guidance on this can be obtained from the Home Office website www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

ANNEX B

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

CSC NI
**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

AN INTRODUCTION

Ensuring appointment on merit
And safeguarding ethics

WHO ARE WE?

Brenda McLaughlin, CBE (Chairperson)
Ruth Laird
Tony Hopkins, CBE
Vilma Patterson, MBE
Dr Raymond Mullan, OBE
Marion Matchett

LOCATION

Our Office is in Windsor House.
The full address is:

5th Floor
Windsor House
Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7SR

OPENING HOURS

The Office is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm,
Monday to Friday, except Public and Bank Holidays.

How to contact us

- write to us at the address at the top of the page
- telephone us on **028 9054 9151**
- fax us at **028 9054 9414**
- visit us at www.nicscommissioners.org

Annex B

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

WHAT ARE WE HERE TO DO?

Civil Service Commissioners are appointed by the Crown to uphold the principle that selection for appointment to posts in the Civil Service should be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

WHERE DO WE GET OUR AUTHORITY FROM?

Commissioners derived their responsibilities from prerogative Orders made by the Secretary of State. Our authority currently derives from the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

We do it by:

- making General Regulations.
- publishing and maintaining a Recruitment Code setting out the essential principles and procedures on which recruitment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service must be based. Departments and Agencies must follow this Code. A copy is available online at: www.nicscommissioners.org
- it is inevitable that occasions will arise when special circumstances lead to Departments needing to depart from the Merit Principle. The Commissioners have set out the circumstances in which they are prepared to look at requests to depart from the Merit Principle. These 'exceptions' must be notified to, and in some instances approved by, the Commissioners before an appointment can be made.
- auditing recruitment policies and practices followed by Departments and Agencies in making appointment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Each year, the Commissioners decide on a particular aspect of recruitment to examine in detail (an audit) and request management consultants to carry out independent investigations on their behalf. The results of these audits are published in the Commissioners' Annual Report.
- requiring Departments and Agencies to publish information about their recruitment activity.

- approving procedures for appointment, through open competition, to the Senior Civil Service in Northern Ireland.
- hearing and determining appeals under the Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics. Under the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999, we have been assigned the role of providing an independent appeals mechanism for Northern Ireland civil servants. The Code of Ethics sets out the constitutional framework within which civil servants work and the values they are expected to uphold. Details of the number and nature of the appeals received by the Commissioners are published each year in our Annual Report.

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

If you have ever applied for a post in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, you can be assured that, whether or not you were successful, the Department or Agency was obliged to make that appointment in accordance with directions for good practice set out by the Commissioners.

We are concerned that civil servants are not fully aware of the appeals mechanism under the Code of Ethics. We would strongly encourage any civil servant who believes that he or she has been asked to act in a way which

- is illegal, improper or unethical;
- is in breach of constitutional convention or a professional code;
- may involve a possible maladministration; or
- is otherwise inconsistent with the Code

to report the matter in accordance with procedures laid down in the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pay and Conditions Code or Departmental guidance.

Where the matter has been reported in the appropriate manner and a civil servant believes the response does not represent a reasonable response to his or her concerns, s/he may report the matter in writing to the Civil Service Commissioners.

**Candidate
Information
Booklet**

IRC73774

**Office of the Attorney General for
Northern Ireland**

Director

**Completed Application Forms
must be returned to HRConnect
no later than 12 noon (UK time)
on**

Friday 3rd September 2010

Communication between HRConnect and you

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

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BACKGROUND

On devolution of justice, the arrangement whereby the Attorney General for England and Wales is also Attorney General for Northern Ireland comes to an end. The Justice (NI) Act 2002 provides for the appointment of an independent, non-political Attorney General for Northern Ireland. The Attorney General has a range of statutory and non-statutory responsibilities including as chief legal adviser to the Executive.

The Attorney General's Office will deal with the most important and complex legal matters facing the Executive and Departments, providing advice and where necessary conducting litigation. The establishment of a statutorily independent Attorney General marks a significant change in how the top end of government legal services is organised and delivered in Northern Ireland, and puts the rule of law at the very heart of government.

The Attorney has responsibility for referring any Assembly legislation, where there is doubt about its vires, to the UK Supreme Court, and is a notice party in devolution litigation. Statute provides that the Attorney General for Northern Ireland may participate in the proceedings of the Assembly to the extent permitted by its standing orders but he may not vote in the Assembly.

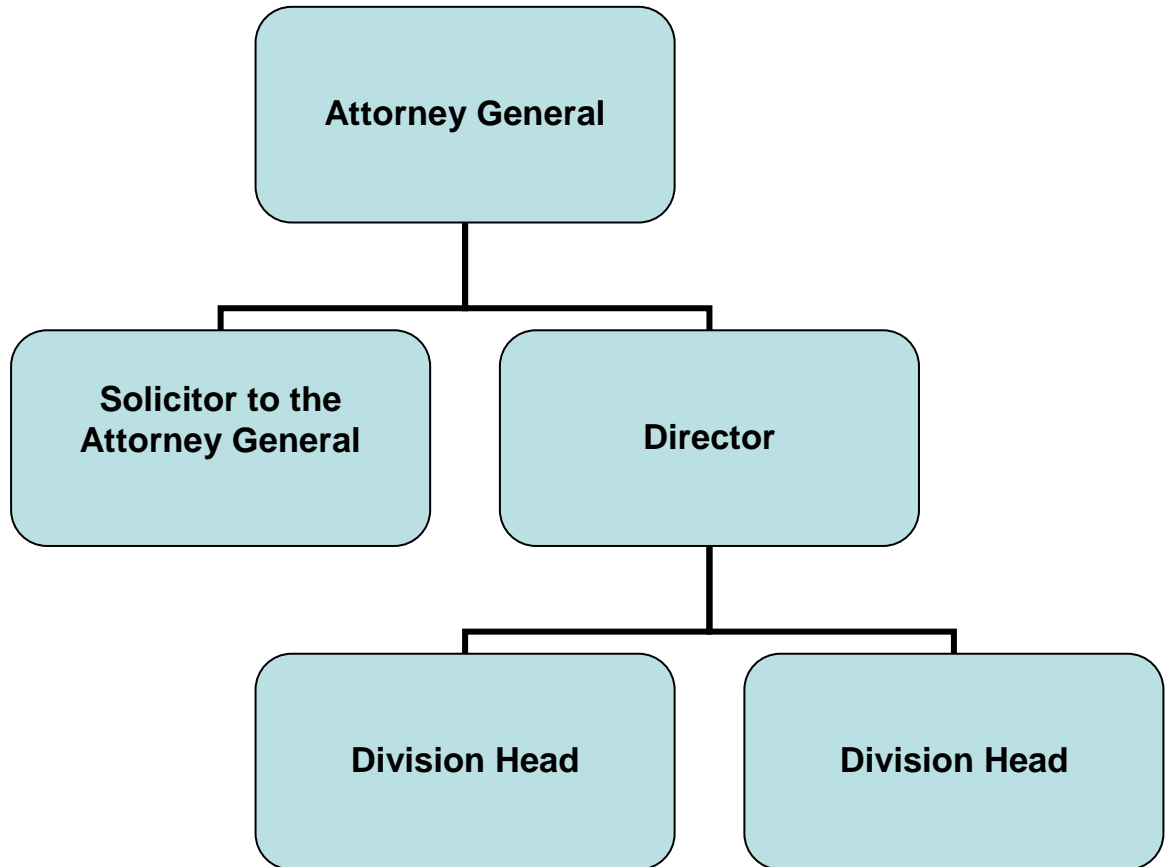
Other responsibilities of the Attorney include representing the public interest in charity matters; ordering fresh inquests; and issuing human rights guidance to criminal justice organisations.

To guarantee the independence of the Attorney, his Office will have an arm's length relationship with the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. Staff will have Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) terms and conditions.

At the core of the Office will be a legal secretariat responsible for providing advice on the most important and complex matters facing the Executive and Ministers.

TOP LEVEL ORGANISATIONAL CHART

Office of the Attorney General (NI)



The Solicitor, Director and Division Heads are all equivalent to Senior Civil Service Grade 5

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Director will be the Chief Executive of the Attorney General's Office and will direct a team of legal and administrative staff. He/she will be a key member of the senior management team, which will be headed by the Attorney General (AG) and will include the Solicitor to the Attorney General (G5), Division Heads (G5) and the Head of Corporate Services (G7).

It is essential that the Director has comprehensive knowledge and experience of the justice system, including knowledge of developments in legislation and legal doctrine (including developments in human rights), and ideally should also have experience in leading and organising a range of legal and administrative staff. The Director will be an effective and articulate communicator as she or he will be expected to give interviews to the press on a range of legal matters, including re-opening inquests and contempt of court cases. She or he will also prepare written material often explaining technical legal matters to a variety of audiences.

The Director will present authoritative recommendations to the Attorney General and senior management team and with them, make effective decisions in relation to the strategic direction of the Office. This will require careful and insightful thinking on new and innovative ideas, policies and initiatives to support development of the Strategic Plan and the associated budget. The post holder will also advise on the implications of wider political and other developments which may impact on the Office.

The Director will shape the strategic direction of the Office. Internally this will involve contributing to the creation and definition of the organisational vision and high level goals through the construction of a Corporate Plan and ensuring that this is translated into practical implementation strategies and timetabled plans contained within the Annual Business Plan. They will be required to develop a framework for measuring performance against organisational targets and goals and ensuring that regular performance reports are provided to the Attorney General.

As the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland is a new organisation working in a fresh and rapidly changing environment, there will be no precedent or road map to follow in such an extremely sensitive and challenging arena. Therefore, the post holder should be highly competent in the formulation of strategy and policy, and also the acquisition and management of all the resources necessary for the implementation of strategy and policy. The post holder needs to be able to influence and harness the ideas and demands from a wide range of external stakeholders, and hence must be confident and articulate in a number of public and other forums.

This will be an exceptionally demanding role which requires well developed influencing and negotiating skills. The postholder will be required to have the experience and ability to develop and establish effective working relationships

with, and secure the support of, colleagues, partners, stakeholders and clients. Examples of the foregoing include finalising the AG's annual report; working closely on the development and maintenance of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Director of Public Prosecutions; liaising with the PSNI on operational matters that can be taken account of and considered when shaping the activities of the Office; discussion on local, national and international aspects of Human Rights standards; working with charitable organisations to ensure compliance with the high standards of charity regulation; contact with the media; and liaising with the Executive in relation to legal advice from the AG. Given the territory the post holder will be operating in, much of the work will be completely novel and hugely challenging.

The post holder will be required to resolve exceptionally sensitive issues, including the consideration of whether to release information under Freedom of Information. Tact, diplomacy and well developed negotiating skills must therefore be demonstrated to overcome resistance and gain compromises, ensuring that problems are resolved in a non-confrontational manner and without damaging key relationships.

The post holder will represent the Office on various groups and forums, as well as championing the work and key messages of the Office to a wide and diverse audience including politicians, Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, senior officials in Government Departments and external organisations. The post holder will employ good judgement and awareness to ensure that key messages are tailored to meet the needs of a variety of audiences. The post holder will be responsible for briefing material, responses to Assembly Questions, Freedom of Information requests, media interaction and inputs to annual reports and publications.

A challenging aspect of this role will be keeping up-to-date with developments in legislation and legal doctrine – including developments in human rights, Government policies and developments in analogous offices in other jurisdictions.

As Director, the post holder will have personal responsibility for the overall organisation, management and staffing of the Office and for its procedures in financial and other matters. They will ensure that desired outcomes are delivered and benefits realised by continually analysing and evaluating organisational performance and reporting this upwards accordingly. The post holder will also take key resource decisions based on operational requirements.

The Director will ensure that there is a high standard of financial management in the Office and that financial systems and processes promote the efficient and economical conduct of business as well as safeguarding financial propriety and regularity throughout the Office.

The post holder will ensure that effective governance systems are developed and put in place within the Office to comply with statutory obligations and best practice.

The Office will have a staffing compliment of around 21 staff, with an annual budget of £1.9M. The post holder will be responsible for all staff comprising a mix of legal and administrative roles. Key work activities will include formal reporting and appraisal, objective setting, taking account of personal development needs, resolving grievances and continually motivating staff in a highly pressured and visible environment.

The Director's post will attract a supervisory allowance (5% of basic salary) as it will also have line management responsibility for 2 lawyers at the same grade.

The Director will provide high quality organisational leadership, articulating a clear vision and objectives, building and sustaining commitment to their achievement. This will include developing an organisational culture focused on high standards of quality and effective service delivery. The post holder will motivate staff through the difficult set-up period and beyond.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the direction of the Attorney General, the main duties for the Director will be:

- a) shaping the strategic direction of the Office through the formulation of policy and strategy; contributing to the creation and definition of the organisational vision, high level goals and strategic objectives;
- b) overall coordination and quality assurance of legal cases within the Office;
- c) significant and intensive influencing and negotiating with key stakeholders;
- d) ensuring corporate plans are produced including an annual business plan and implementation strategies;
- e) ensuring that organisational targets and goals are monitored and achieved;
- f) line managing senior lawyers and liaising with legal colleagues and others in external organisations, as required;
- g) overall responsibility for the resources of the Office including establishing high standards of financial management, propriety and regularity within the Office;
- h) ensuring effective governance systems are in place to comply with statutory obligations and best practice;
- i) providing high quality organisational leadership.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This is a permanent full-time appointment and is a Grade 5 NICS post within the Senior Civil Service (SCS).

The successful candidate will be employed in the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland.

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

SALARY

The salary for the post will be within the range £57,300 to £116,000 within which pay progression will be performance related. Starting salary is normally the minimum of the payscale; however a higher starting salary may be available where it is considered that this is appropriate, for example where a successful applicant has additional relevant experience and/or qualifications. If the successful candidate is an existing civil servant, normal regrading terms will apply.

LOCATION

The post holder will be based initially in Lesley House, 25 Wellington Place, Belfast, BT1 6GD. It is envisaged that the permanent location will also be in Belfast City Centre.

TRAVEL

Although based in Belfast, the post holder may be expected to travel throughout Northern Ireland, as well as nationally and occasionally internationally as required.

WORKING HOURS

In common with all SCS appointments, the post holder will be required to work outside their normal conditioned hours, where it is necessary, to fulfil the demands of the post.

HOLIDAYS

In addition to the 12 public and privilege holidays, the annual leave entitlement is 30 days.

PENSIONS

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pensions package. Further details of this can be found on pages 21 and 22 of this booklet.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications:

- 1) hold a degree of at least 2:1 standard;

AND

- 2) have at least 3 years senior management* experience of significant issues relating to the key responsibilities (a) to (c) on page 8;

AND

- 3) have comprehensive knowledge and experience of the justice system including knowledge of developments in legislation, legal doctrine and human rights.

*** Senior Management includes providing detailed advice on, or taking decisions personally, or being party to decisions affecting, strategic issues concerning the corporate body or organisation with which an individual is working, either as an employee or advisor.**

SHORTLISTING CRITERION

In addition applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to interview, the following shortlisting criterion will be applied:

- 1) Experience in leading and organising a range of legal and administrative staff.

NB: Candidates must demonstrate in the application form evidence of the above Eligibility and Shortlisting criteria by way of examples and dates.

Please note:

- You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.
- It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.
- The Department will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.
- If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.
- **ONLY** the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post.
- The Department may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information available, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability.
- Further information on the Professional Skills for Government framework as it applies to this post can be obtained by accessing <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/people/psg/psg-identifier/PSG-skills-identifier.aspx>

NB: These should be considered within the specific context of the requirements for this post.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Northern Ireland Civil Service has adopted the Professional Skills for Government as a framework for the purpose of personal and professional development

What is the PSG competency framework?

The Professional Skills for Government (PSG) competency framework is a structured way of thinking about jobs and careers for Civil Service staff at all grades. It sets out the skills you need to do your job well as a member of the Civil Service, no matter what grade you are or where you work.

How does the PSG framework look?

The PSG competency framework is divided into the following separate but supporting areas:

3. **Leadership** - Civil Service leadership qualities sit at the centre of the framework. These are to:
 - provide direction for the organisation
 - deliver results
 - build capacity for the organisation to address current and future challenges
 - act with integrity
2. **Core skills** - Every civil servant needs certain core skills to work effectively. At Senior Civil Service level the core skills are:
 - people management - evidence of developing team capability in line with the business plan and organisational vision; managing change effectively and promoting best practice
 - financial management – evidence of planning, agreeing and monitoring the delivery of financial targets, and of identifying and implementing innovative ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources and assets
 - analysis and use of evidence – evidence of ensuring that the evidence base for the strategy and work of the organisation is open to critical challenge and inspires the confidence of stakeholders
 - programme and project management – evidence of responsibility for the definition and successful delivery of programme/project benefits, managing risks and communicating effectively with stakeholders
 - strategic thinking – evidence of influencing the organisation's strategy and priorities, and managing the tensions arising from conflicting organisational priorities, wider policy environment and operational constraints

- communications and marketing – evidence of aligning policy and delivery with clear communications objectives, taking into account the wider organisational communications agenda

3. Professional skills

- Job-specific professional skills are related to the work you do. Everyone in the Civil Service requires some professional skills to do their job, whether they work in policy development, operational delivery or corporate services, or provide expert advice (for example, scientists, economists and communicators). This area of the PSG competency framework is supported by Heads of Profession, who set standards for all professions in the Civil Service.

Further information on the Professional Skills for Government framework as it applies to this post can be obtained by accessing

<http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/people/psg/psg-identifier/PSG-skills-identifier.aspx>

This link will take you directly to the Professional Skills for Government skills identifier tool.

Step 1

Please click on Leadership – select your grade

Then click on grade 6, 7 or SCS

The leadership qualities required for this grade will then be displayed.

Please click on PSG skills identifier home.

Step 2

Please click on Core Skills – select your grade

Then click on Deputy Director (SCS pay band 1)

The core skills required for this grade will then be displayed.

Please click on PSG skills identifier home.

Step 3

Please click on Professional Skills – select your profession

Then click on Policy Delivery.

Please then download the skills framework for Policy development which will appear as a PDF file.

NB: These professional skills should be considered within the specific context of the requirements for this post.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process will be in 2 parts, with a presentation exercise immediately followed by a competence-based interview.

PRESENTATION EXERCISE

As part of the selection process, immediately prior to interview candidates will be required to undertake a presentation exercise. The presentation exercise is completed on an individual basis. Candidates will be required to read the material provided and prepare a presentation in accordance with the guidance provided.

The time allocated for the preparation of this task will be 45 minutes. Candidates will then be required to make their presentation for 20 minutes and take questions from the panel (5 minutes of that 20 minute period has been allocated for questions from the panel, which can be asked at any point during the presentation) The presentation will take place at the beginning of the interview.

A pen and paper will be available in the pre-interview preparation room. No personal documentation may be brought in to this room. The only materials candidates will be permitted to bring into interview will be the written material prepared in the pre-interview room.

The presentation exercise will be used to contribute to the assessment of several key competences/assessment criteria. It will be used to assess the competence of Analysis and Use of Evidence in its entirety and along with the competence based interview to assess the competences of Communication and Marketing and Strategic Thinking.

KEY COMPETENCES/ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The key competences/assessment criteria to be assessed at interview or through the presentation exercise are as follows: -

1. Analysis and Use of Evidence

Evidence of ensuring an appropriate evidence base exists for the strategic development and work of the organisation and that this is open to challenge and inspires the confidence of stakeholders.

2. Communications & Marketing

Evidence of highly developed interpersonal and communication skills; of a track record of successful negotiation and influence with key stakeholders in difficult circumstances; and of aligning policy and delivery with clear communication objectives, taking into account the wider organisational communications agenda

3. People Management

Evidence of developing team capability in line with the business plan and organisational vision; managing change effectively through engaging and influencing staff and other stakeholders.

4. Strategic Thinking

Evidence of influencing the organisation's strategies and priorities and managing the tensions arising from conflicting organisational priorities, the wider policy environment, and operational constraints.

5. Programme and Project Management

Evidence of responsibility for the definition and successful delivery of programme/project benefits, managing risks and communicating effectively with stakeholders.

6. Leadership

Evidence of acting with integrity and providing direction for the organisation; of delivering results and building the capability of the organisation to address current and future challenges; and of forging, maintaining and managing constructive working relationships.

7. Financial Management

Evidence of planning, agreeing and monitoring the delivery of financial targets, including use of appropriate internal controls and governance arrangements; and of identifying and implementing innovative ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources and assets.

PASS MARK

The overall pass mark for the competition will be 108 out of a possible 180 (60%). Within this overall pass mark, a minimum individual pass mark of 48 out of 80 (60%) must also be obtained against the Presentation exercise.

COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS

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

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Belfast during week commencing 27th September 2010.

INTERVIEW GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

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

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

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

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

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

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

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

SELECTION PROCESS

The Merit Principle

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

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

Making your application:

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

Guidance for Applicants

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline;
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.

Application Form Submission

- We will not accept incomplete application forms, application forms received after the closing deadline or reformatted application forms.
- Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to HRConnect.
- We will not accept any application where we are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, all requests for hard copy application packs are welcomed and all applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.

Changes in personal circumstances

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances.

Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account 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.

Applicants Employed in the NICS/NIO

Please note:

HRConnect adheres to CSC 7/04 (ICSC 6/04) (PSN 128/04) regarding sickness absence. Applicants employed in the NICS/NIO within the past two years in a permanent or temporary capacity should familiarise themselves with its content as it may affect your eligibility to apply. CSC 7/04 (ICSC 6/04) (PSN 128/04) is available from your present/former HR department.

Further appointments from this competition

Where a further position in the NICS/NIO is identified which is considered broadly similar to that outlined in this candidate information booklet, consideration will be given to filling the position from this competition. The merit list resulting from this competition will be valid for a period of up to one year.

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.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

Please note, this form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it will result in disqualification.

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to page 23.

As women are currently known to be under represented at this grade across the NICS, applications from women would be particularly welcome.

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit

Interview/Assessment Information

It is HRConnect policy that all candidates invited to attend for interview/assessment bring sufficient documentation to satisfy the eligibility/shortlisting criteria and the Nationality and Vetting requirements. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for interview/assessment.

You should ensure that these documents are readily available.

Nationality Requirements

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. The Director – Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland posts are classified as Non-Public Service, therefore certain nationality requirements apply. Applicants must be either:

- (xiii) A UK national; or
- (xiv) A Commonwealth citizen; or
- (xv) A British Protected Person; or
- (xvi) An EEA national; or
- (xvii) A Swiss National; or
- (xviii) A person who is not an EEA or Swiss national, but is a family member of an EEA national who has moved to the UK from another EEA Member State for an approved purpose.

For further guidance on Nationality requirements please see Annex A.

Advice on Nationality for (i), (ii) and (iii) above may be obtained from the Home Office website, www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Vetting Procedures

For Director – Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland post in the NICS the level of vetting is Security Check (SC) which will include:

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

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

- i) Your passport OR
- j) 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).
- k) Other acceptable documents are listed on www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.
- l) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

Standard Disclosure Certificate

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

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.

Order of Merit

The selection panel will assess candidates against the interview criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The selection panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed. The order of merit is valid for one year.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Pensions:

New entrants who join the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) are eligible to join the NICS pension scheme, the (PCSPS (NI)) – NUVOS arrangement. Pension is an important part of the reward package for civil servants and, on average, employers pay more than 18% of pay towards pension costs. As well as providing you with an easy and secure way to help you provide for your retirement, the PCSPS (NI) also provides dependants and ill health benefits.

We offer all new employees the choice of either:

- Nuvos - a high quality, index-linked defined benefit pension scheme that currently has a 3.5% member contribution rate. Your employing Department also makes contributions; or
- Partnership in a stakeholder type money purchase arrangement with an employer contribution. The employer basic contribution is based on your age, and this is paid regardless of whether you choose to contribute. You do not have to contribute if you do not wish to, but if you do your employing Department will match your contributions up to an additional 3% of pay. Your employing Department will also pay a further contribution, of 0.8% of pay, to the PCSPS (NI) to cover you for Death in Service benefits.

If you previously worked for an employer covered by the PCSPS (NI) arrangements, different conditions may apply. If you already have a PCSPS (NI) pension in payment, you should be aware that the pension scheme rules prevent members from receiving more by way of pay and pension combined on re-employment than they were earning as salary before they retired. This is called “abatement”. If you want to know more about how this may affect you, please contact Civil Service Pensions at:

Waterside House,
75 Duke Street,
Londonderry,
BT47 6FP;
Tel: 028 7131 9000;
Email: cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk

If you left the NICS with an early retirement, severance or redundancy package then your existing benefits may be affected if you accept this post. If your service was enhanced (increased) when you left then you will not be able to build up benefits in the defined benefit scheme during the period that is covered by the enhancement included in your existing benefits. If you opt to join the Partnership arrangement, employer contributions will not be payable for this enhancement period but you will be able to contribute if you wish. If you are receiving a pension or annual compensation payment then this may be reduced during your re-employment. If you received a top-up payment

under the early severance temporary arrangements then your pay may be reduced during your re-employment. If you want to know more about this, please contact Civil Service Pensions.

You may be able to transfer a pension with your current or a previous employer into the PCSPS (NI). Information on Transfers In can be found in the New Entrant Pack which you should receive on taking up employment.

Feedback

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

THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Please return completed form to:

HRConnect Recruitment Team

Post: HRConnect
PO Box 1089
2nd Floor
The Metro Building
6-9 Donegall Square South
Belfast
BT1 9EW

Email: Recruitment@HRConnect.nigov.net

Tel: 0800 1 300 330

Fax: 028 9024 1665

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Policy Statement

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equal Opportunities Policy statement is set out below.

“The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is committed to providing equality of opportunity. It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the NICS on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which all workers are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated. This right is protected in many instances by legislation.

In order to provide a high quality service to the people of Northern Ireland the NICS needs to recruit, retain and promote the best available people. Our equal opportunities policy is central to this strategy. We aim to foster a culture which encourages every member of staff to develop his or her full potential and which rewards achievement. Creating a working environment where individual differences are valued and respected enables all staff to give of their best and helps us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve.

The NICS seeks to maintain the confidence of the whole community. It will continue to promote equality of opportunity and fair participation within the framework of the law and will strive to achieve a workforce that is broadly representative of the society which it serves.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to apply this policy. Both Management and Trade Union Side are fully committed to the policy and will endeavour to ensure its full implementation.”

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Equality monitoring is the process of collecting, storing and analysing information that is relevant to and necessary for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity between different categories of persons. This section sets out what information is collected, the reasons for doing so and what it is used for.

You should note that the Monitoring Form is regarded as part of your application and failure to fully complete and return it will result in disqualification. The Monitoring Form will be processed separately and neither the form nor the details contained in it will be available to those considering your application.

Legislative Context

This section explains the reasons for gathering this information by setting out the legislative background.

Gender

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended) makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of his or her sex. Information on gender is also necessary to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return, as required by the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between men and women generally.

Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 make it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on grounds of age. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different age.

Community Background

The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 outlaws discrimination on the basis of religious belief or political opinion. The information requested in the Community Background section of the monitoring form is required in connection with the requirements of the above Order and to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission for NI.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief and political opinion. Following guidance issued in July 2007 by the Equality Commission for NI the NICS has decided to use “community background” information as a proxy for political opinion.

Disability

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) provides protection for disabled persons against discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The DDA defines disability as a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

This definition is interpreted as follows:-

Physical Impairment: this includes, for instance, a weakening of part of the body (eyes, ears, limbs, internal organs etc) caused through illness by

accident or from birth. Examples would be blindness, deafness, paralysis of a leg or heart disease.

Mental Impairment: this includes mental ill health and what is commonly known as learning disability.

Substantial: put simply, this means the effect of the physical or mental impairment on ability to carry out normal day to day activities is more than minor or trivial. It does not have to be a severe effect.

Long-term adverse effect: the effect has to have lasted or be likely to last overall for at least 12 months and the effect must be a detrimental one. A person with a life expectancy of less than 12 months is of course covered if the effect is likely to last for the whole of that time.

A normal day to day activity: this is something which is carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis such as washing, eating, catching a bus or turning on a television. It does not mean something so individual as playing a musical instrument to a professional standard or doing everything involved in a particular job.

What sort of effect must there be?

The person must be affected in at least one of the respects listed in the DDA: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech; hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; or perception of risk of physical danger.

What happens if the effects are reduced by medication or other treatment?

Broadly speaking, the effects that matter are those that would be present if there was no medication or treatment taking place. The exception is people who wear spectacles or contact lenses when what matters is the effect that remain while the spectacles or contact lenses are being used.

Are there any types of condition covered by special provisions in the DDA?

Yes, because some people with particular conditions might not otherwise be counted as disabled. These are provisions covering:

Recurring or fluctuating conditions such as arthritis, where the effects can sometimes be less than substantial, which are treated as continuing to have a substantial adverse effect so long as that effect is likely to recur;

Conditions which progressively deteriorate, such as motor neuron disease, which count as having a substantial effect from the first time they have any effect at all on ability to carry out normal day to day activities even if it is not substantial, so long as there is eventually likely to be a substantial adverse effect; and

People with cancer, HIV, or multiple sclerosis are deemed to be disabled people from the point of diagnosis, regardless of whether or not they have any symptoms.

Are any conditions not covered?

Yes, the following conditions specifically do not count as impairments:

Addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless resulting from the substance being medically prescribed);

Seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hay fever) unless it aggravates the effect of another condition;

Tendency to set fires, or steal, or physically or sexually abuse other persons;

Exhibitionism and voyeurism;

Severe disfigurements consisting of tattoos, non-medical body piercing or attachments to such piercing are not treated as having substantial adverse effects.

What if someone has recovered from a disability?

Much of the DDA also applies to people who have had a disability in the past (for example, someone who was disabled by mental ill health) but have now fully recovered. People who were registered disabled under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (NI) 1945 both on 12 January 1995 and 2 December 1996 will be regarded as having had a disability in the past if they do not in any case fall within the definition of the DDA.

Race

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial group.

Sexual Orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) Order 2003 makes it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. In order to monitor the effectiveness of NICS policies information is gathered on sexual orientation. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different sexual orientation.

Marital Status & Dependants

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different marital status and between persons with dependants and persons without.

Use of Monitoring Information

Monitoring information is used to enable the NICS to assess the effectiveness of its EO policies and to determine the impact (if any) of various policies and procedures on different categories of staff. In addition to this internal focus community background and gender information on both staff and applicants is used to complete the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission.

Confidentiality of Monitoring Information

As with other forms of personal data, the obtaining, use, storage and disclosure of monitoring information is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). Monitoring information is held on computer and is protected by a high level of security. Access to this data is restricted to those NICS staff, employees of HRConnect and Trade Union officials whose duties make it necessary for them to have it. Misuse of monitoring information is viewed as a disciplinary offence.

The confidentiality of community background information is also protected through regulations made under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (FETO). These make it a criminal offence, subject to specific exceptions, for an employer or employee to disclose information on the community background of an individual which has been obtained or used for the purposes of monitoring under FETO.

The release of an individual's monitoring information is permitted by legislation as part of prospective or actual proceedings under equality legislation, e.g. where another individual has made a complaint of alleged discrimination.

Many people from all backgrounds in Northern Ireland and beyond are interested in the profile of the NICS workforce and the candidates who apply for jobs. For this reason the NICS regularly publishes data in the form of statistical summaries, graphs etc. On occasions it may also be necessary to use monitoring information to answer questions from Assembly Members, MPs and MEPs or to respond to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act. In all cases where information is made public, the format of presentation will be such that it will not be possible to identify any individual's information.

ANNEX A

Nationality

(i) 'UK National' means a person who is a British citizen (including persons from the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man), a British subject under Part IV of the British Nationality Act 1981 having the right of abode in the UK or a British Dependent Territories citizen acquiring his/her citizenship from connection with Gibraltar.

(ii) 'Commonwealth Citizen' means any person who has the status of a Commonwealth citizen under the British Nationality Act 1981, not covered by the 'UK Nationality' definition above. This includes British Dependent Territories citizens (other than Gibraltarians), British Overseas citizens, and from 1986 those persons in the category British National (Overseas).

(iii) 'British Protected Person' means a member of any class of persons declared to be British Protected Persons by Order in Council under the British Nationality Act 1981, or by virtue of the Solomon Islands Act 1978.

(iv) 'EEA National' means a national of one of the following countries:

Austria	France	Liechtenstein	**Romania
Belgium	Germany	Lithuania	Slovakia
**Bulgaria	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Cyprus	Hungary	Malta	Spain
Czech Republic	Iceland	Netherlands	Sweden
Denmark	Ireland	Norway	United Kingdom
Estonia	Italy	Poland	
Finland	Latvia	Portugal	

N.B. nationals from Switzerland also have the same free movement and employment rights.

'Family member of an EEA national' means:

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

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

** Non-exempt Bulgarian and Romanian nationals are required to be registered under the Worker Authorisation Scheme prior to appointment. Guidance on this can be obtained from the Home Office website www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

ANNEX B

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

CSC NI
**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

AN INTRODUCTION

Ensuring appointment on merit
And safeguarding ethics

WHO ARE WE?

Brenda McLaughlin, CBE (Chairperson)
Ruth Laird
Tony Hopkins, CBE
Vilma Patterson, MBE
Dr Raymond Mullan, OBE
Marian Matchett, CBE

LOCATION

Our Office is in Windsor House.
The full address is:

5th Floor
Windsor House
Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7SR

OPENING HOURS

The Office is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm,
Monday to Friday, except Public and Bank Holidays.

How to contact us

- write to us at the address at the top of the page
- telephone us on **028 9054 9151**
- fax us at **028 9054 9414**
- visit us at www.nicscommissioners.org

Annex B CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

WHAT ARE WE HERE TO DO?

Civil Service Commissioners are appointed by the Crown to uphold the principle that selection for appointment to posts in the Civil Service should be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

WHERE DO WE GET OUR AUTHORITY FROM?

Commissioners derived their responsibilities from prerogative Orders made by the Secretary of State. Our authority currently derives from the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

We do it by:

- making General Regulations.
- publishing and maintaining a Recruitment Code setting out the essential principles and procedures on which recruitment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service must be based. Departments and Agencies must follow this Code. A copy is available online at: www.nicscommissioners.org
- it is inevitable that occasions will arise when special circumstances lead to Departments needing to depart from the Merit Principle. The Commissioners have set out the circumstances in which they are prepared to look at requests to depart from the Merit Principle. These 'exceptions' must be notified to, and in some instances approved by, the Commissioners before an appointment can be made.
- auditing recruitment policies and practices followed by Departments and Agencies in making appointment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Each year, the Commissioners decide on a particular aspect of recruitment to examine in detail (an audit) and request management consultants to carry out independent investigations on their behalf. The results of these audits are published in the Commissioners' Annual Report.
- requiring Departments and Agencies to publish information about their recruitment activity.

- approving procedures for appointment, through open competition, to the Senior Civil Service in Northern Ireland.
- hearing and determining appeals under the Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics. Under the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999, we have been assigned the role of providing an independent appeals mechanism for Northern Ireland civil servants. The Code of Ethics sets out the constitutional framework within which civil servants work and the values they are expected to uphold. Details of the number and nature of the appeals received by the Commissioners are published each year in our Annual Report.

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

If you have ever applied for a post in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, you can be assured that, whether or not you were successful, the Department or Agency was obliged to make that appointment in accordance with directions for good practice set out by the Commissioners.

We are concerned that civil servants are not fully aware of the appeals mechanism under the Code of Ethics. We would strongly encourage any civil servant who believes that he or she has been asked to act in a way which

- is illegal, improper or unethical;
- is in breach of constitutional convention or a professional code;
- may involve a possible maladministration; or
- is otherwise inconsistent with the Code

to report the matter in accordance with procedures laid down in the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pay and Conditions Code or Departmental guidance.

Where the matter has been reported in the appropriate manner and a civil servant believes the response does not represent a reasonable response to his or her concerns, s/he may report the matter in writing to the Civil Service Commissioners.

**Candidate
Information
Booklet**

IRC77807

**Office of the First Minister and deputy
First Minister**

**Legislative Counsel Grade 5
(2 Posts)**

**Completed Application Forms
must be returned to HRConnect
no later than 12 noon (UK time)
on
Friday 7th January 2011**

**Office of the First Minister and
deputy First Minister.**

Creating Opportunity, releasing

Communication between HRConnect and you

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

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FOREWORD

Legislative Counsel Grade 5 (2 Posts), Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) is at the heart of the devolved government in Northern Ireland. Within OFMDFM and based at Parliament Buildings in Belfast, the Office of the Legislative Counsel works closely with all of the government departments, assisting Ministers and officials to deliver the Northern Ireland Executive's legislative programme by translating policy into legislation.

The restoration of devolved government and the recent devolution of policing and justice have created increased demand for primary legislation and we wish to recruit experienced drafters to augment our team.

The quality of the drafting work that you have already done is important to us. We are looking for someone who can point to a track record of achievement in their drafting career to date. But we are also looking for someone with ambition to keep developing. We offer you the flexibility and challenge of working across a variety of subject areas, enabling you to broaden and develop your experience at an exciting time of growing demand for your work.

We are open to discussion about alternative work patterns that support a healthy work-life balance as part of a competitive reward package for the role.

These posts may be filled by the secondment of the successful candidates from their current posts.

Where the successful candidate has to relocate home in order to take up appointment, the Department will consider the reimbursement of reasonable expenses (in part or full) as a result of the relocation.

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply may contact Sharon Murdock (Assistant Solicitor) by telephoning 028 90521309 or by emailing sharon.murdock@ofmdfmi.gov.uk.

Thank you for your interest.

George Gray

First Legislative Counsel

BACKGROUND

Context

The Office of the Legislative Counsel is a specialised team of lawyers based at Parliament Buildings, Belfast. Their main task is drafting Bills for the Northern Ireland Executive, (the Executive) for introduction into the Northern Ireland Assembly, (the Assembly). They also work with Parliamentary Counsel in Whitehall to ensure the correct application to Northern Ireland of Westminster Bills.

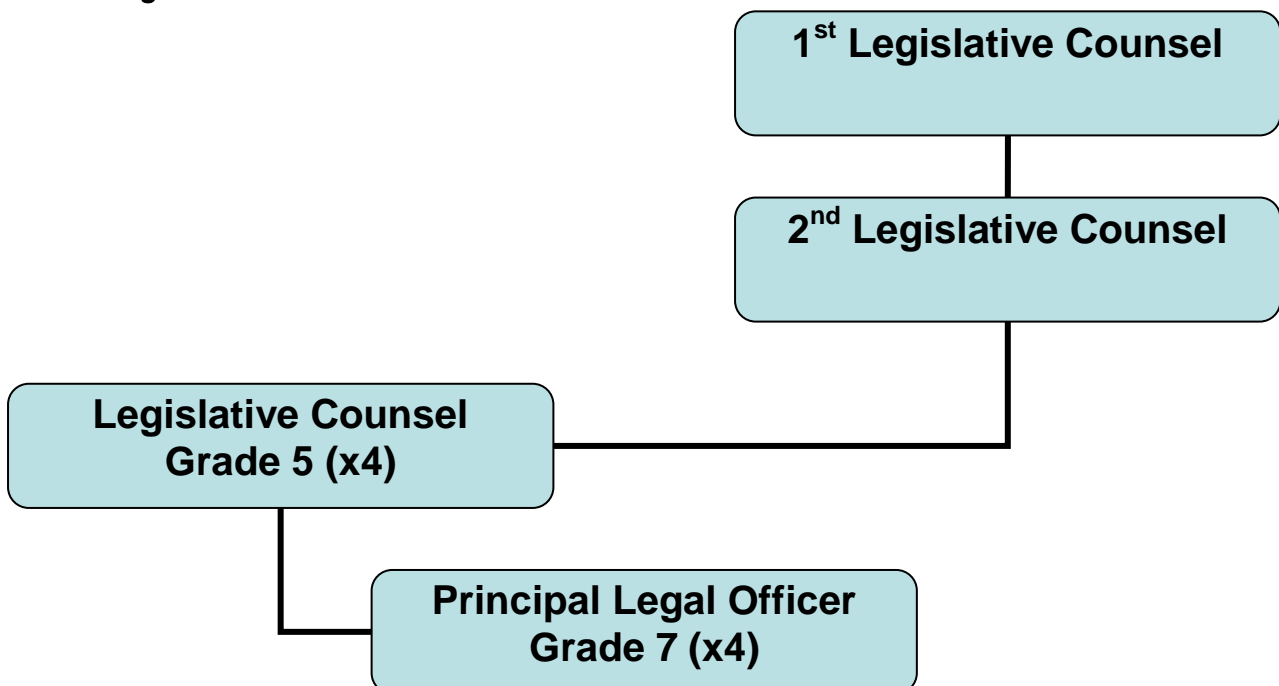
Executive Bills are drafted to give effect to policy instructions from the Northern Ireland department concerned. The legislative programme is agreed by Ministers. The functions of legislative counsel include the clarification and detailed working out with administrators of the policy to be given effect by the Bill. Counsel are then responsible for selecting the conceptual and legislative structures appropriate for this purpose and for drafting the legislation necessary to give effect to the policy.

The work includes drafting and advising on amendments to Bills in their passage through the Assembly and co-operating with Assembly officials in the passage of Bills.

Senior drafters will frequently work alone on a Bill; experienced drafters will however be involved in mentoring, training and developing more junior counsel.

Counsel are expected to deal with a Bill on any subject, though specialisation within the Office is encouraged. Bills often have to be prepared under pressure generated either by the need to adhere to the agreed Executive legislative programme of Ministers or by the urgency of the subject-matter of a particular Bill.

Organisation Structure



TERMS & CONDITIONS (2 POSTS)

Appointments

These are permanent appointments to the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Senior Civil Service and the successful appointees will be employees of the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

These posts may be filled by the secondment of the successful candidates from their current posts.

It is advisable that candidates interested in the secondment option make their employers aware that, under the NICS secondment arrangements, the successful candidate will remain an employee of their current employer. The necessary administrative arrangements will be agreed between the department and the employer before secondment commences.

Where a further position in the NICS is identified which is considered broadly similar to that outlined in this candidate information booklet, consideration will be given to filling the position from this competition. The order of merit is valid for one year.

Salary

The salary for the post will be within the range £57,300 - £116,000 (under review) within which annual pay progression will be in conformance with the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) annual pay review. Starting salary above the minimum of the payscale may be available where it is considered appropriate, taking account of relevant experience and/or qualifications.

Where the successful candidate has to relocate home in order to take up appointment, the Department will consider the reimbursement of reasonable expenses (in part or full) as a result of the relocation.

If the successful candidate is an existing civil servant, normal pay on promotion arrangements will apply.

In order to comply with Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) guidance, salaries of the Senior Civil Service are disclosable, including any taxable benefits in kind and pension, in our annual accounts. We may also have to disclose additional information should DFP guidance change. As a condition of appointment, the successful candidate must agree to this disclosure.

Location

The postholders will be based at Parliament Buildings, Belfast.

Working Hours

In common with all SCS appointments, the post holders will be required to work outside their normal conditioned hours, where it is necessary, to fulfil the demands of the post.

Holidays

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

Pensions

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pensions package. Further details of this can be found on pages 17 and 18 of this booklet.

Further Information

If you have any questions about the competition process, you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email: recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net.

JOB DESCRIPTION

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Drafting requires an analytical mind, imagination and the ability to express oneself clearly on paper.

The main duties of the post will include:

- analysing and clarifying policy proposals of instructing government departments;
- selecting conceptual and legislative structures appropriate to deliver policy objectives;
- drafting Bills to give effect to policy objectives;
- facilitating passage of Bills through the Assembly, including drafting of amendments and co-operating with Assembly officials;
- providing advice to government departments on legislative and related constitutional matters;
- liaising with Parliamentary Counsel in Whitehall to ensure the correct application to Northern Ireland of Westminster Bills; and
- the mentoring, training and developing of more junior counsel.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications:

- 1) Hold a professional legal qualification;

AND

- 2) Have a high level of experience in drafting primary legislation.

High level is defined as having the ability to produce drafting of high quality without, or with very little supervision.

PLEASE NOTE:

Applicants must submit 3 substantive and demanding examples of their work by the closing date for applications.

These examples will be considered by the selection panel in determining eligibility in respect of criterion 2 and, if necessary, the shortlisting criterion. The selection panel will also draw on these examples at interview.

You cannot attach this information to the online application form. It should therefore be sent, marked with the relevant competition reference number and the candidate's full name for the attention of External Resourcing, Team 2 to:

**HRConnect, PO BOX 1089,
2nd Floor,
Metro Building,
6-9 Donegall Square South,
Belfast, BT1 9EW**

or by email to: recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net

Where this information is not provided by the closing date, the application form will be treated as incomplete, and will not be forwarded to the selection panel for consideration.

SHORTLISTING CRITERION

In addition applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to interview, the following shortlisting criteria will be used:

Candidates should provide evidence of ability to;

- 1) Deal with a variety of demanding topics.

Please note:

- You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.
- It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.
- The Department will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.
- If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.
- **ONLY** the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post.
- The Department may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information available, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability.
- Further information on the Professional Skills for Government framework as it applies to this post can be obtained by accessing <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/improving/psg/psg-identifier/PSG-skills-identifier.aspx>

NB: These will be considered within the specific context of the requirements for these posts.

Step 1

Please click on "Leadership" – select your grade

Then click on "SCS"

The leadership qualities required for this grade will then be displayed.

Please click on "PSG skills identifier home".

Step 2

Please click on "Core Skills" – select your grade

Then click on "Deputy Director" (SCS pay band 1)

The core skills required for this grade will then be displayed.

Please click on "PSG skills identifier home".

INTERVIEW CRITERIA

Candidates who satisfy the eligibility criteria and where necessary the shortlisting criterion, will be invited to participate in the next stage of the selection process.

PRESENTATION

Before interview candidates will be required to deliver a short presentation lasting no longer than 7 minutes. Candidates will be advised of the presentation topic 30 minutes before interview. A choice of writing materials and a flip-chart will be available to assist in preparations. No personal documentation may be brought in to the pre-interview room. A Flip Chart stand will also be available in the interview room to enable candidates to present the prepared information. The only materials candidates will be permitted to bring into interview will be flip-chart sheets or written material prepared in the pre-interview room.

The presentation will be used to contribute to the Professional Skills & Strategic Thinking Competencies. Please see below.

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEW

The following section outlines the Professional Skills for Government framework as it applies to this role and will be the basis for assessment at interview.

KEY COMPETENCES

In addition to satisfying the eligibility criteria and where necessary the shortlisting criterion, applicants will also be expected to display the following qualities and skills at interview:

1. Professional Skills

Evidence of securing, maintaining, developing and applying relevant legal knowledge and expertise and providing a linking role between lawyers and policy makers.

2. Leadership

Evidence of providing direction, delivering results, building capacity to address current and future challenges and acting with integrity.

3. People Management

Evidence of achieving organisational aims through the engagement, development and leadership of staff and influencing clients and other stakeholders.

4. Financial Management

Evidence of managing resources effectively and an awareness of the principles of government finance.

5. Strategic Thinking

Evidence of contributing to the development of strategy, policy and priorities and identifying risks and difficulties that have to be managed.

6. Analysis and Use of Evidence

Evidence of working guided and informed by research and robust analysis of information provided by clients and others; communicating effectively with clients and other stakeholders.

7. Programme and Project Management

Evidence of effective project planning in relation to legislative and other projects;

8. Communications and Marketing

Evidence of identifying and sharing information on issues affecting clients and other stakeholders in a manner that is readily understood by both lawyers and non-lawyers.

The overall pass mark for the competition will be 120 of a possible 200 (60%). Within this overall pass mark, a minimum individual pass mark of 25 out of 40 (62.5%) must be obtained against the Professional Skills criterion.

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Belfast on the **8th and 9th February 2011**.

INTERVIEW GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

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

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

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

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

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

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

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

SELECTION PROCESS

The Merit Principle

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

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

Making your application:

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

Guidance for Applicants

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline;
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.

Application Form Submission

- We will not accept incomplete application forms, application forms received after the closing deadline or reformatted application forms.
- Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to HRConnect.
- We will not accept any application where we are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, all requests for hard copy application packs are welcomed and all applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.

Changes in personal circumstances

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances.

Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account 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.

Further appointments from this competition

Where a further position in the NICS is identified which is considered broadly similar to that outlined in this candidate information booklet, consideration will be given to filling the position from this competition. The merit list resulting from this competition will be valid for a period of up to one year.

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.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

Please note, this form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it will result in disqualification.

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to page 19.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit

Assessment Information

It is HRConnect policy that all candidates invited to attend for assessment bring sufficient documentation to satisfy the eligibility/shortlisting criteria and the Nationality and Vetting requirements. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for assessment.

You should ensure that these documents are readily available.

Nationality Requirements

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. The Legislative Counsel Grade 5 posts are classified as Non-Public Service, therefore certain nationality requirements apply. Applicants must be either:

- (xix) A UK national; or
- (xx) A Commonwealth citizen; or
- (xxi) A British Protected Person; or
- (xxii) An EEA national; or
- (xxiii) A Swiss National; or
- (xxiv) A person who is not an EEA or Swiss national, but is a family member of an EEA national who has moved to the UK from another EEA Member State for an approved purpose.

For further guidance on Nationality requirements please see Annex A.

Advice on Nationality for (i), (ii) and (iii) above may be obtained from the Home Office website, www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Vetting Procedures

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For Legislative Counsel Grade 5 posts in the NICS the level of vetting is a Baseline Standard. For this check you will be required to provide the following:

- m) Your passport OR

- n) 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).
- o) Other acceptable documents are listed on www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.
- p) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

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

Basic Disclosure Certificate

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

Order of Merit

The selection panel will assess candidates against the interview criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The selection panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed. The order of merit is valid for one year.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Pensions:

New entrants who join the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) are eligible to join the NICS pension scheme, the (PCSPS (NI) – NUVOS arrangement. Pension is an important part of the reward package for civil servants and, on average, employers pay more than 18% of pay towards pension costs. As well as providing you with an easy and secure way to help you provide for your retirement, the PCSPS (NI) also provides dependants and ill health benefits.

We offer all new employees the choice of either:

- Nuvos - a high quality, index-linked defined benefit pension scheme that currently has a 3.5% member contribution rate. Your employing Department also makes contributions; or
- Partnership in a stakeholder type money purchase arrangement with an employer contribution. The employer basic contribution is based on your age, and this is paid regardless of whether you choose to contribute. You do not have to contribute if you do not wish to, but if you do your employing Department will match your contributions up to an additional 3% of pay. Your employing Department will also pay a further contribution, of 0.8% of pay, to the PCSPS (NI) to cover you for Death in Service benefits.

If you previously worked for an employer covered by the PCSPS (NI) arrangements, different conditions may apply. If you already have a PCSPS (NI) pension in payment, you should be aware that the pension scheme rules prevent members from receiving more by way of pay and pension combined on re-employment than they were earning as salary before they retired. This is called “abatement”. If you want to know more about how this may affect you, please contact Civil Service Pensions at:

Waterside House,
75 Duke Street,
Londonderry,
BT47 6FP;
Tel: 028 7131 9000;
Email: cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk

If you left the NICS with an early retirement, severance or redundancy package then your existing benefits may be affected if you accept this post. If your service was enhanced (increased) when you left then you will not be able to build up benefits in the defined benefit scheme during the period that is covered by the enhancement included in your existing benefits. If you opt to join the Partnership arrangement, employer contributions will not be payable for this enhancement period but you will be able to contribute if you wish. If you are receiving a pension or annual compensation payment then this may be reduced during your re-employment. If you received a top-up payment

under the early severance temporary arrangements then your pay may be reduced during your re-employment. If you want to know more about this, please contact Civil Service Pensions.

You may be able to transfer a pension with your current or a previous employer into the PCSPS (NI). Information on Transfers In can be found in the New Entrant Pack which you should receive on taking up employment.

Feedback

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

THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Please return completed form to:

HRConnect Recruitment Team

Post: HRConnect
PO Box 1089
2nd Floor
The Metro Building
6-9 Donegall Square South
Belfast
BT1 9EW

Email: Recruitment@HRConnect.nigov.net

Tel: 0800 1 300 330

Fax: 028 9024 1665

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Policy Statement

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equal Opportunities Policy statement is set out below.

“The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is committed to providing equality of opportunity. It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the NICS on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which all workers are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated. This right is protected in many instances by legislation.

In order to provide a high quality service to the people of Northern Ireland the NICS needs to recruit, retain and promote the best available people. Our equal opportunities policy is central to this strategy. We aim to foster a culture which encourages every member of staff to develop his or her full potential and which rewards achievement. Creating a working environment where individual differences are valued and respected enables all staff to give of their best and helps us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve.

The NICS seeks to maintain the confidence of the whole community. It will continue to promote equality of opportunity and fair participation within the framework of the law and will strive to achieve a workforce that is broadly representative of the society which it serves.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to apply this policy. Both Management and Trade Union Side are fully committed to the policy and will endeavour to ensure its full implementation.”

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Equality monitoring is the process of collecting, storing and analysing information that is relevant to and necessary for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity between different categories of persons. This section sets out what information is collected, the reasons for doing so and what it is used for.

You should note that the Monitoring Form is regarded as part of your application and failure to fully complete and return it will result in disqualification. The Monitoring Form will be processed separately and neither the form nor the details contained in it will be available to those considering your application.

Legislative Context

This section explains the reasons for gathering this information by setting out the legislative background.

Gender

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended) makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of his or her sex. Information on gender is also necessary to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return, as required by the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between men and women generally.

Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 make it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on grounds of age. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different age.

Community Background

The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 outlaws discrimination on the basis of religious belief or political opinion. The information requested in the Community Background section of the monitoring form is required in connection with the requirements of the above Order and to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission for NI.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief and political opinion. Following guidance issued in July 2007 by the Equality Commission for NI the NICS has decided to use “community background” information as a proxy for political opinion.

Disability

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) provides protection for disabled persons against discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The DDA defines disability as a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

This definition is interpreted as follows:-

Physical Impairment: this includes, for instance, a weakening of part of the body (eyes, ears, limbs, internal organs etc) caused through illness by

accident or from birth. Examples would be blindness, deafness, paralysis of a leg or heart disease.

Mental Impairment: this includes mental ill health and what is commonly known as learning disability.

Substantial: put simply, this means the effect of the physical or mental impairment on ability to carry out normal day to day activities is more than minor or trivial. It does not have to be a severe effect.

Long-term adverse effect: the effect has to have lasted or be likely to last overall for at least 12 months and the effect must be a detrimental one. A person with a life expectancy of less than 12 months is of course covered if the effect is likely to last for the whole of that time.

A normal day to day activity: this is something which is carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis such as washing, eating, catching a bus or turning on a television. It does not mean something so individual as playing a musical instrument to a professional standard or doing everything involved in a particular job.

What sort of effect must there be?

The person must be affected in at least one of the respects listed in the DDA: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech; hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; or perception of risk of physical danger.

What happens if the effects are reduced by medication or other treatment?

Broadly speaking, the effects that matter are those that would be present if there was no medication or treatment taking place. The exception is people who wear spectacles or contact lenses when what matters is the effect that remain while the spectacles or contact lenses are being used.

Are there any types of condition covered by special provisions in the DDA?

Yes, because some people with particular conditions might not otherwise be counted as disabled. These are provisions covering:

Recurring or fluctuating conditions such as arthritis, where the effects can sometimes be less than substantial, which are treated as continuing to have a substantial adverse effect so long as that effect is likely to recur;

Conditions which progressively deteriorate, such as motor neuron disease, which count as having a substantial effect from the first time they have any effect at all on ability to carry out normal day to day activities even if it is not substantial, so long as there is eventually likely to be a substantial adverse effect; and

People with cancer, HIV, or multiple sclerosis are deemed to be disabled people from the point of diagnosis, regardless of whether or not they have any symptoms.

Are any conditions not covered?

Yes, the following conditions specifically do not count as impairments:

Addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless resulting from the substance being medically prescribed);

Seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hay fever) unless it aggravates the effect of another condition;

Tendency to set fires, or steal, or physically or sexually abuse other persons;

Exhibitionism and voyeurism;

Severe disfigurements consisting of tattoos, non-medical body piercing or attachments to such piercing are not treated as having substantial adverse effects.

What if someone has recovered from a disability?

Much of the DDA also applies to people who have had a disability in the past (for example, someone who was disabled by mental ill health) but have now fully recovered. People who were registered disabled under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (NI) 1945 both on 12 January 1995 and 2 December 1996 will be regarded as having had a disability in the past if they do not in any case fall within the definition of the DDA.

Race

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial group.

Sexual Orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) Order 2003 makes it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. In order to monitor the effectiveness of NICS policies information is gathered on sexual orientation. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different sexual orientation.

Marital Status & Dependants

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different marital status and between persons with dependants and persons without.

Use of Monitoring Information

Monitoring information is used to enable the NICS to assess the effectiveness of its EO policies and to determine the impact (if any) of various policies and procedures on different categories of staff. In addition to this internal focus community background and gender information on both staff and applicants is used to complete the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission.

Confidentiality of Monitoring Information

As with other forms of personal data, the obtaining, use, storage and disclosure of monitoring information is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). Monitoring information is held on computer and is protected by a high level of security. Access to this data is restricted to those NICS staff, employees of HRConnect and Trade Union officials whose duties make it necessary for them to have it. Misuse of monitoring information is viewed as a disciplinary offence.

The confidentiality of community background information is also protected through regulations made under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (FETO). These make it a criminal offence, subject to specific exceptions, for an employer or employee to disclose information on the community background of an individual which has been obtained or used for the purposes of monitoring under FETO.

The release of an individual's monitoring information is permitted by legislation as part of prospective or actual proceedings under equality legislation, e.g. where another individual has made a complaint of alleged discrimination.

Many people from all backgrounds in Northern Ireland and beyond are interested in the profile of the NICS workforce and the candidates who apply for jobs. For this reason the NICS regularly publishes data in the form of statistical summaries, graphs etc. On occasions it may also be necessary to use monitoring information to answer questions from Assembly Members, MPs and MEPs or to respond to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act. In all cases where information is made public, the format of presentation will be such that it will not be possible to identify any individual's information.

ANNEX A

Nationality

(i) 'UK National' means a person who is a British citizen (including persons from the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man), a British subject under Part IV of the British Nationality Act 1981 having the right of abode in the UK or a British Dependent Territories citizen acquiring his/her citizenship from connection with Gibraltar.

(ii) 'Commonwealth Citizen' means any person who has the status of a Commonwealth citizen under the British Nationality Act 1981, not covered by the 'UK Nationality' definition above. This includes British Dependent Territories citizens (other than Gibraltarians), British Overseas citizens, and from 1986 those persons in the category British National (Overseas).

(iii) 'British Protected Person' means a member of any class of persons declared to be British Protected Persons by Order in Council under the British Nationality Act 1981, or by virtue of the Solomon Islands Act 1978.

(iv) 'EEA National' means a national of one of the following countries:

Austria	France	Liechtenstein	**Romania
Belgium	Germany	Lithuania	Slovakia
**Bulgaria	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Cyprus	Hungary	Malta	Spain
Czech Republic	Iceland	Netherlands	Sweden
Denmark	Ireland	Norway	United Kingdom
Estonia	Italy	Poland	
Finland	Latvia	Portugal	

N.B. nationals from Switzerland also have the same free movement and employment rights.

'Family member of an EEA national' means:

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

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

** Non-exempt Bulgarian and Romanian nationals are required to be registered under the Worker Authorisation Scheme prior to appointment. Guidance on this can be obtained from the Home Office website www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

ANNEX B

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

CSC NI
**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

AN INTRODUCTION

Ensuring appointment on merit
And safeguarding ethics

WHO ARE WE?

Brenda McLaughlin, CBE (Chairperson)
Ruth Laird
Tony Hopkins, CBE
Vilma Patterson, MBE
Dr Raymond Mullan, OBE
Marion Matchett, CBE

LOCATION

Our Office is in Windsor House.
The full address is:

5th Floor
Windsor House
Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7SR

OPENING HOURS

The Office is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm,
Monday to Friday, except Public and Bank Holidays.

How to contact us

- write to us at the address at the top of the page
- telephone us on **028 9054 9151**
- fax us at **028 9054 9414**
- visit us at www.nicscommissioners.org

Annex B CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

WHAT ARE WE HERE TO DO?

Civil Service Commissioners are appointed by the Crown to uphold the principle that selection for appointment to posts in the Civil Service should be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

WHERE DO WE GET OUR AUTHORITY FROM?

Commissioners derived their responsibilities from prerogative Orders made by the Secretary of State. Our authority currently derives from the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

We do it by:

- making General Regulations.
- publishing and maintaining a Recruitment Code setting out the essential principles and procedures on which recruitment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service must be based. Departments and Agencies must follow this Code. A copy is available online at: www.nicscommissioners.org
- it is inevitable that occasions will arise when special circumstances lead to Departments needing to depart from the Merit Principle. The Commissioners have set out the circumstances in which they are prepared to look at requests to depart from the Merit Principle. These 'exceptions' must be notified to, and in some instances approved by, the Commissioners before an appointment can be made.
- auditing recruitment policies and practices followed by Departments and Agencies in making appointment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Each year, the Commissioners decide on a particular aspect of recruitment to examine in detail (an audit) and request management consultants to carry out independent investigations on their behalf. The results of these audits are published in the Commissioners' Annual Report.
- requiring Departments and Agencies to publish information about their recruitment activity.

- approving procedures for appointment, through open competition, to the Senior Civil Service in Northern Ireland.
- hearing and determining appeals under the Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics. Under the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999, we have been assigned the role of providing an independent appeals mechanism for Northern Ireland civil servants. The Code of Ethics sets out the constitutional framework within which civil servants work and the values they are expected to uphold. Details of the number and nature of the appeals received by the Commissioners are published each year in our Annual Report.

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

If you have ever applied for a post in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, you can be assured that, whether or not you were successful, the Department or Agency was obliged to make that appointment in accordance with directions for good practice set out by the Commissioners.

We are concerned that civil servants are not fully aware of the appeals mechanism under the Code of Ethics. We would strongly encourage any civil servant who believes that he or she has been asked to act in a way which

- is illegal, improper or unethical;
- is in breach of constitutional convention or a professional code;
- may involve a possible maladministration; or
- is otherwise inconsistent with the Code

to report the matter in accordance with procedures laid down in the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pay and Conditions Code or Departmental guidance.

Where the matter has been reported in the appropriate manner and a civil servant believes the response does not represent a reasonable response to his or her concerns, s/he may report the matter in writing to the Civil Service Commissioners.

**Candidate
Information
Booklet**

IRC79014

**Office of the Attorney General for
Northern Ireland**

**Division Head - Office of the Attorney
General for Northern Ireland
(1 post)**

**Completed Application Forms
must be returned to HRConnect
no later than 12 noon (UK time)**

**on
Friday 7th January 2011**

***Office of the Attorney General for
Northern Ireland***

Communication between HRConnect and you

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

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BACKGROUND

On devolution of justice, the arrangement whereby the Attorney General for England and Wales is also Attorney General for Northern Ireland comes to an end. The Justice (NI) Act 2002 provides for the appointment of an independent, non-political Attorney General for Northern Ireland. The Attorney General has a range of statutory and non-statutory responsibilities including as chief legal adviser to the Executive.

The Attorney General's Office will deal with the most important and complex legal matters facing the Executive and Departments, providing advice and where necessary conducting litigation. The establishment of a statutorily independent Attorney General marks a significant change in how the top end of government legal services is organised and delivered in Northern Ireland, and puts the rule of law at the very heart of government.

The Attorney has responsibility for referring any Assembly legislation, where there is doubt about its vires, to the UK Supreme Court, and is a notice party in devolution litigation. Statute provides that the Attorney General for Northern Ireland may participate in the proceedings of the Assembly to the extent permitted by its standing orders but he may not vote in the Assembly.

To guarantee the independence of the Attorney, his Office will have an arms length relationship with the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM). Staff will have civil service terms and conditions.

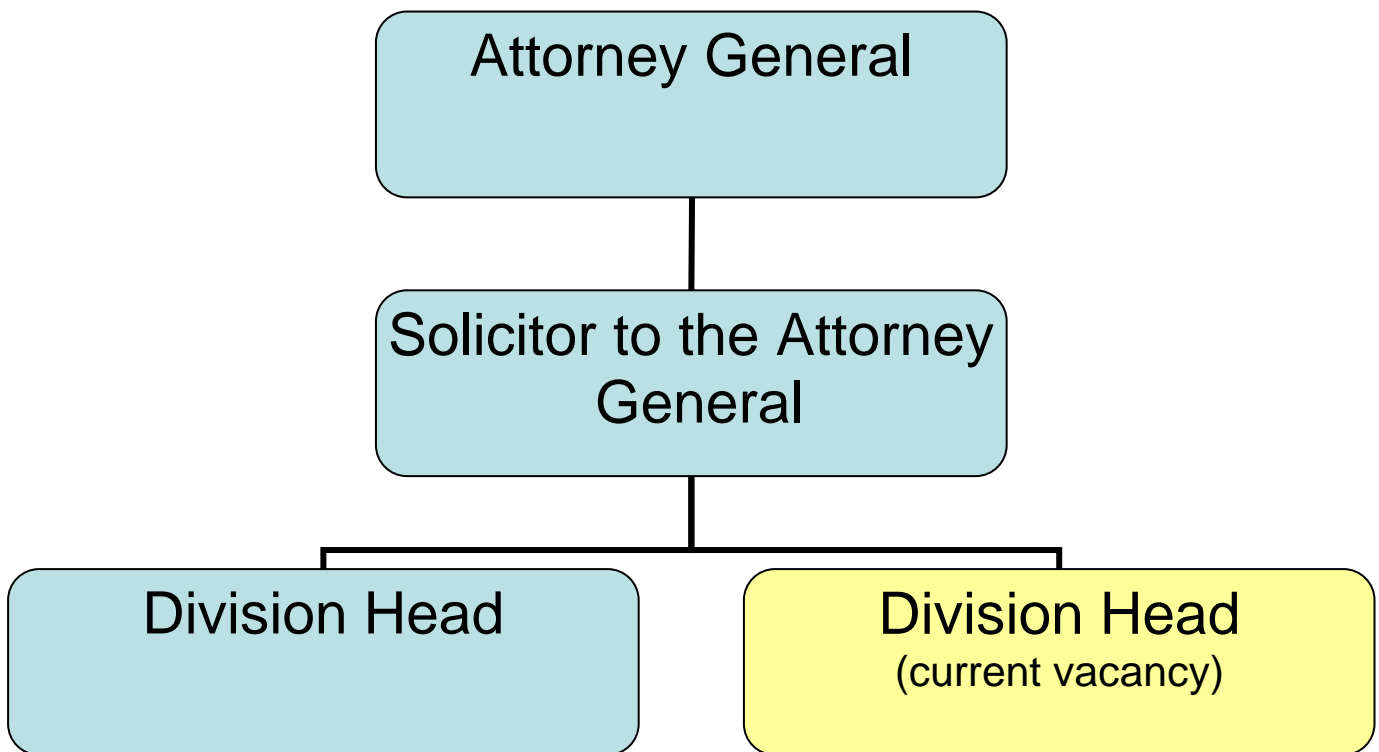
At the core of the Office will be a legal secretariat responsible for providing advice on the most important and complex matters facing the Executive and Ministers.

Other responsibilities of the Attorney include representing the public interest in charity matters; ordering fresh inquests; and issuing human rights guidance to criminal justice organisations.

Excellence in legal scholarship is at the heart of the Office and the post holder will be expected to set an example in this regard.

TOP LEVEL ORGANISATIONAL CHART

Office of the Attorney General (NI)



The Solicitor, Director and Division Heads are all equivalent to Senior Civil Service Grade 5

JOB DESCRIPTION

This is a permanent full-time appointment for Grade 5 within the Senior Civil Service (SCS).

The successful candidate will be employed in the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland.

Each Division Head will be responsible for matters referred from half of the Northern Ireland Departments, albeit with some flexibility dependent on caseloads. Duties on matters such as human rights, charities, international and European Union issues will be allocated between the Division Heads on the direction of the Attorney or the Solicitor to the Attorney General.

The post holder will regularly make very significant contributions, through advice given, to the formulation of Executive and Departmental policies and to Ministerial decision-making with the greatest cost, impact and political considerations. Each Division Head will often be working on highly visible issues and politically sensitive events where law and politics coincide; all will be complex and multifaceted, involving thorough research and analysis to produce a robust answer, which will require political sensitivity. Advice will be required on litigation test cases, the ramifications of which may impact across a wide part of the public and private sectors.

Many of the topics on which advice is sought will have European Convention on Human Rights / European Union dimensions.

During consultation on statutory human rights advice the post holder will engage directly with senior figures in human rights organisations, the voluntary and community sector and statutory organisations in explaining the approach taken, responding to criticism and considering representations received.

The post holder's responsibilities will include giving final advice to the Attorney on the certification that proposed legislation is within the competence of the Northern Ireland Assembly including compliance within the European Convention on Human Rights and Community law.

The post holder will need to provide advice at short notice on any legal implications of papers being considered by the Executive.

The post holder will have regular responsibilities in relation to contentious and highly complex and urgent judicial review cases including settling affidavits, assembling instructions to Counsel, and instructing Counsel at hearings. Potentially, as rights of audience change, the post holder may appear personally as an advocate in significant cases including judicial reviews and major aspects of litigation, whether before domestic courts or international tribunals.

Decisions will often be required at very short notice - the leave, substantive hearing and appeal stages of an urgent judicial review can happen within a

matter of hours or days - but even when there is considerable time pressure the quality of advice and representation must be maintained.

In the establishment phase of the Office the person appointed will need, leading by example, to foster an approach consistent with the desired culture of the Office. The post holder will make a vital contribution to the development of a dedicated team capable of responding to the complex range of demands to which the Office will respond. It will be important to encourage open communication and flexibility within the legal team and the wider Office, as projects will often call for a variety of specialisms and approaches. The post holder will motivate the team through the challenges of the establishment period and taking the office forward.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The main duties for each Division Head will be:

- lead their teams to ensure the highest standards in legal research, analysis and advice;
- prepare and account for advice to Departments and the Executive on the most important and complex legal issues facing government;
- consultations with Departments and Departmental Solicitors Office;
- supervise the preparation of statutory guidance on human rights and the exercise of the Attorney General's responsibilities as guardian of the public interest in charity matters;
- participate, as required, in the litigation demands of the Office;
- lead the examination of legislation to ensure its vires;
- as a member of the senior management team, influence corporate thinking and planning and provide leadership in the critical establishment period of the Attorney's Office.

While the number of people managed by the post holder will be small, the post holder will be working closely with other able lawyers. An emphasis on teamwork and joint contribution to projects will be critical given the highly complex and multi-faceted nature of the work undertaken by the Office.

The post holder will organise the work of their team to best match resources and requirements; examine incoming work and assign it according to skills of team members and the complexity of issues; and deal with staffing issues including sitting on recruitment panels as required.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

SALARY

The salary for these posts will be within the range £57,300 to £116,000 (under review) within which pay progression will be performance related. Starting salary is normally the minimum of the payscale; however a higher starting salary may be available where it is considered that this is appropriate, for example where a successful applicant has additional relevant experience and/or qualifications. If the successful candidates are existing civil servants, normal regrading terms will apply.

LOCATION

The postholder will be based initially in Belfast City Centre. It is envisaged that the permanent location will also be in Belfast City Centre.

TRAVEL

Although based in Belfast, the postholder may be expected to travel throughout Northern Ireland, as well as nationally and occasionally internationally as required.

WORKING HOURS

In common with all SCS appointments, the postholder will be required to work outside their normal conditioned hours, where it is necessary, to fulfil the demands of the post.

HOLIDAYS

In addition to the statutory holidays, the annual leave entitlement is 30 days.

PENSIONS

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pensions package. Further details of this can be found on pages 20-21 of this booklet.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications:

- 1) hold a degree in any discipline of at least 2:1 standard;

AND

- 2) be a barrister or solicitor entitled to practise in Northern Ireland;

AND

- 3) have at least 7 years experience of - (i) advising on significant legal issues; and (ii) doing so in a complex environment.

Solicitors and barristers must possess, at the closing date for applications, a current practicing certificate to satisfy eligibility criterion 2 above.

SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

In addition applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to interview, the following shortlisting criteria will be applied sequentially:

- 1) Evidence of significant experience in advocacy AND negotiation.
- 2) Evidence of sustained high quality continuing professional development since qualification as a barrister or solicitor.

NOTE: High quality continuing professional development can be demonstrated by, for example, publishing books or articles dealing with legal topics; speaking or lecturing at external conferences or seminars; successfully completing one or more postgraduate degrees; attendance at lectures or seminars greatly in excess of the prescribed annual minimum.

Please note:

- **You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.**
- **It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.**
- **The panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.**
- **If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.**
- **ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post.**
- **The panel may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information available, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability.**

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Northern Ireland Civil Service has adopted the Professional Skills for Government as a framework for the purpose of personal and professional development

What is the PSG competency framework?

The Professional Skills for Government (PSG) competency framework is a structured way of thinking about jobs and careers for Civil Service staff at all grades. It sets out the skills you need to do your job well as a member of the Civil Service, no matter what grade you are or where you work.

How does the PSG framework look?

The PSG competency framework is divided into the following separate but supporting areas:

4. **Leadership** - Civil Service leadership qualities sit at the centre of the framework. These are to:
 - provide direction for the organisation
 - deliver results
 - build capacity for the organisation to address current and future challenges
 - act with integrity
2. **Core skills** - Every civil servant needs certain core skills to work effectively. At Senior Civil Service level the core skills are:
 - people management - evidence of developing team capability in line with the business plan and organisational vision; managing change effectively and promoting best practice
 - financial management – evidence of planning, agreeing and monitoring the delivery of financial targets, and of identifying and implementing innovative ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources and assets
 - analysis and use of evidence – evidence of ensuring that the evidence base for the strategy and work of the organisation is open to critical challenge and inspires the confidence of stakeholders
 - programme and project management – evidence of responsibility for the definition and successful delivery of programme/project benefits, managing risks and communicating effectively with stakeholders
 - strategic thinking – evidence of influencing the organisation's strategy and priorities, and managing the tensions arising from conflicting organisational priorities, wider policy environment and operational constraints

- communications and marketing – evidence of aligning policy and delivery with clear communications objectives, taking into account the wider organisational communications agenda

3. Professional skills

- Job-specific professional skills are related to the work you do. Everyone in the Civil Service requires some professional skills to do their job, whether they work in policy development, operational delivery or corporate services, or provide expert advice (for example, scientists, economists and communicators). This area of the PSG competency framework is supported by Heads of Profession, who set standards for all professions in the Civil Service.

Further information on the Professional Skills for Government framework as it applies to this post can be obtained by accessing

<http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/people/psg/psg-identifier/PSG-skills-identifier.aspx>

This link will take you directly to the Professional Skills for Government skills identifier tool.

Step 1

Please click on Leadership – select your grade

Then click on grade 6, 7 or SCS

The leadership qualities required for this grade will then be displayed.

Please click on PSG skills identifier home.

Step 2

Please click on Core Skills – select your grade

Then click on Deputy Director (SCS pay band 1)

The core skills required for this grade will then be displayed.

Please click on PSG skills identifier home.

Step 3

Please click on Professional Skills – select your profession

Then click on Lawyers

Please then download the skills framework for Lawyers profession which will appear as a PDF file.

NB: These should be considered within the specific context of the requirements for this post.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process will be in 2 parts, with an analysis and presentation exercise immediately followed by a competence-based interview.

ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION EXERCISE *(30% of total available score)*

As part of the selection process, immediately prior to interview applicants will be required to undertake an exercise involving a scenario case study. The case study exercise is completed on an individual basis. Applicants will be required to read the case study and prepare an answer to the question(s), which will be outlined in the instruction booklet.

The time allocated for the preparation of this task will be 45 minutes. Applicants will then be required to present their answers orally for 20 minutes and take questions from the panel during that time.

A pen and paper will be available in the pre-interview preparation room. No personal documentation may be brought in to this room. The only materials candidates will be permitted to bring into interview will be the written material prepared in the pre-interview room.

The scenario case study will be used to contribute to the assessment of several key competences/assessment criteria, namely, Professional Skills, Analysis and Use of Evidence and Communications and Marketing competences (full definitions of each criterion are listed below).

KEY COMPETENCES/ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The key competences/assessment criteria to be assessed at interview or through the analysis and presentation exercise are as follows: -

9. Professional Skills *(30% of total available score)*

Evidence of sound legal knowledge in areas of legal practice relevant to the work of the Attorney General; evidence of giving high quality legal advice and translating legal knowledge for both a legal and a lay audience; evidence of skill in advocacy and negotiation.

10. Analysis and Use of Evidence (This criterion will be assessed solely through the analysis and presentation exercise)

Evidence of working guided and informed by research and robust analysis of information provided by clients and others; liaising effectively with clients and other stakeholders to manage the quality and completeness of the evidence base.

11. Communications & Marketing

Evidence of identifying and sharing information on issues affecting clients and other stakeholders in a manner that is readily understood by those within the legal profession and without.

12. People Management

Evidence of achieving organisational aims through the engagement and leadership of people, influencing clients and other stakeholders.

13. Strategic Thinking

Evidence of strategic awareness and contributing to the development of strategy, policy or priorities and identifying risks and difficulties that have to be managed.

14. Programme and Project Management

Evidence of effective project planning in relation to legislative or other projects/programmes of work, ensuring that effective stakeholder communication takes place.

15. Leadership

Evidence of acting with integrity, providing direction, delivering results and building capacity to address current and future challenges; and building effective working relationships with stakeholders.

16. Financial Management

Evidence of implementing innovative ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources and assets.

PASS MARK

The overall pass mark for the competition will be 120 out of a possible 200 (60%). Within this overall pass mark, a minimum individual pass mark of 36 out of 60 (60%) must also be obtained against both the Analysis and Presentation exercise and the Professional Skills criterion.

COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS

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

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Belfast during week commencing 14th February 2011.

INTERVIEW GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

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

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

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

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

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

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

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

The Merit Principle

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

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

Making your application:

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

Guidance for Applicants

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline;
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write “I” statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.

Application Form Submission

- We will not accept incomplete application forms, application forms received after the closing deadline or reformatted application forms.
- Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to HRConnect.
- We will not accept any application where we are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, all requests for hard copy application packs are welcomed and all applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.

Changes in personal circumstances

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances.

Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible; you should therefore check your email account 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.

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.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

Please note, this form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it will result in disqualification.

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to page 22.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.

Interview/Assessment Information

It is HRConnect policy that all candidates invited to attend for interview/assessment bring sufficient documentation to satisfy the eligibility/shortlisting criteria and the Nationality and Vetting requirements. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for interview/assessment.

You should ensure that these documents are readily available.

Nationality Requirements

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. The Division Head posts are classified as Non-Public Service, therefore certain nationality requirements apply. Applicants must be either:

- (xxv) A UK national; or
- (xxvi) A Commonwealth citizen; or
- (xxvii) A British Protected Person; or
- (xxviii) An EEA national; or
- (xxix) A Swiss National; or
- (xxx) A person who is not an EEA or Swiss national, but is a family member of an EEA national who has moved to the UK from another EEA Member State for an approved purpose.

For further guidance on Nationality requirements please see Annex A.

Advice on Nationality for (i), (ii) and (iii) above may be obtained from the Home Office website, www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

For Division Head posts in the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland the level of vetting is Security Check (SC) which will include:

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

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

- q) Your passport OR
- r) 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).
- s) Other acceptable documents are listed on www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.
- t) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

Standard Disclosure Certificate

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

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.

Order of Merit

The selection panel will assess candidates against the interview/assessment criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The selection panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed. The order of merit is valid for one year.

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

GENERAL INFORMATION

Pensions:

New entrants who join the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) are eligible to join the NICS pension scheme, the (PCSPS (NI)) – NUVOS arrangement. Pension is an important part of the reward package for civil servants and, on average, employers pay more than 18% of pay towards pension costs. As well as providing you with an easy and secure way to help you provide for your retirement, the PCSPS (NI) also provides dependants and ill health benefits.

We offer all new employees the choice of either:

- Nuvos - a high quality, index-linked defined benefit pension scheme that currently has a 3.5% member contribution rate. Your employing Department also makes contributions; or
- Partnership in a stakeholder type money purchase arrangement with an employer contribution. The employer basic contribution is based on your age, and this is paid regardless of whether you choose to contribute. You do not have to contribute if you do not wish to, but if you do your employing Department will match your contributions up to an additional 3% of pay. Your employing Department will also pay a further contribution, of 0.8% of pay, to the PCSPS (NI) to cover you for Death in Service benefits.

If you previously worked for an employer covered by the PCSPS (NI) arrangements, different conditions may apply. If you already have a PCSPS (NI) pension in payment, you should be aware that the pension scheme rules prevent members from receiving more by way of pay and pension combined on re-employment than they were earning as salary before they retired. This is called “abatement”. If you want to know more about how this may affect you, please contact Civil Service Pensions at:

Waterside House,
75 Duke Street,
Londonderry,
BT47 6FP;
Tel: 028 7131 9000;
Email: cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk

If you left the NICS with an early retirement, severance or redundancy package then your existing benefits may be affected if you accept this post. If your service was enhanced (increased) when you left then you will not be able to build up benefits in the defined benefit scheme during the period that is covered by the enhancement included in your existing benefits. If you opt to join the Partnership arrangement, employer contributions will not be payable for this enhancement period but you will be able to contribute if you wish. If you are receiving a pension or annual compensation payment then this may be reduced during your re-employment. If you received a top-up payment

under the early severance temporary arrangements then your pay may be reduced during your re-employment. If you want to know more about this, please contact Civil Service Pensions.

You may be able to transfer a pension with your current or a previous employer into the PCSPS (NI). Information on Transfers In can be found in the New Entrant Pack which you should receive on taking up employment.

Feedback

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

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

Please return completed form to:

HRConnect Recruitment Team

Post: HRConnect
PO Box 1089
2nd Floor
The Metro Building
6-9 Donegall Square South
Belfast
BT1 9EW
Email: Recruitment@HRConnect.nigov.net
Tel: 0800 1 300 330
Fax: 028 9024 1665

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Policy Statement

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equal Opportunities Policy statement is set out below.

“The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is committed to providing equality of opportunity. It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the NICS on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which all workers are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated. This right is protected in many instances by legislation.

In order to provide a high quality service to the people of Northern Ireland the NICS needs to recruit, retain and promote the best available people. Our equal opportunities policy is central to this strategy. We aim to foster a culture which encourages every member of staff to develop his or her full potential and which rewards achievement. Creating a working environment where individual differences are valued and respected enables all staff to give of their best and helps us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve.

The NICS seeks to maintain the confidence of the whole community. It will continue to promote equality of opportunity and fair participation within the framework of the law and will strive to achieve a workforce that is broadly representative of the society which it serves.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to apply this policy. Both Management and Trade Union Side are fully committed to the policy and will endeavour to ensure its full implementation.”

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Equality monitoring is the process of collecting, storing and analysing information that is relevant to and necessary for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity between different categories of persons. This section sets out what information is collected, the reasons for doing so and what it is used for.

You should note that the Monitoring Form is regarded as part of your application and failure to fully complete and return it will result in disqualification. The Monitoring Form will be processed separately and neither the form nor the details contained in it will be available to those considering your application.

Legislative Context

This section explains the reasons for gathering this information by setting out the legislative background.

Gender

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended) makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of his or her sex. Information on gender is also necessary to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return, as required by the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between men and women generally.

Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 make it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on grounds of age. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different age.

Community Background

The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 outlaws discrimination on the basis of religious belief or political opinion. The information requested in the Community Background section of the monitoring form is required in connection with the requirements of the above Order and to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission for NI.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief and political opinion. Following guidance issued in July 2007 by the Equality Commission for NI the NICS has decided to use “community background” information as a proxy for political opinion.

Disability

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) provides protection for disabled persons against discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The DDA defines disability as a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

This definition is interpreted as follows:-

Physical Impairment: this includes, for instance, a weakening of part of the body (eyes, ears, limbs, internal organs etc) caused through illness by

accident or from birth. Examples would be blindness, deafness, paralysis of a leg or heart disease.

Mental Impairment: this includes mental ill health and what is commonly known as learning disability.

Substantial: put simply, this means the effect of the physical or mental impairment on ability to carry out normal day to day activities is more than minor or trivial. It does not have to be a severe effect.

Long-term adverse effect: the effect has to have lasted or be likely to last overall for at least 12 months and the effect must be a detrimental one. A person with a life expectancy of less than 12 months is of course covered if the effect is likely to last for the whole of that time.

A normal day to day activity: this is something which is carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis such as washing, eating, catching a bus or turning on a television. It does not mean something so individual as playing a musical instrument to a professional standard or doing everything involved in a particular job.

What sort of effect must there be?

The person must be affected in at least one of the respects listed in the DDA: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech; hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; or perception of risk of physical danger.

What happens if the effects are reduced by medication or other treatment?

Broadly speaking, the effects that matter are those that would be present if there was no medication or treatment taking place. The exception is people who wear spectacles or contact lenses when what matters is the effect that remain while the spectacles or contact lenses are being used.

Are there any types of condition covered by special provisions in the DDA?

Yes, because some people with particular conditions might not otherwise be counted as disabled. These are provisions covering:

Recurring or fluctuating conditions such as arthritis, where the effects can sometimes be less than substantial, which are treated as continuing to have a substantial adverse effect so long as that effect is likely to recur;

Conditions which progressively deteriorate, such as motor neuron disease, which count as having a substantial effect from the first time they have any effect at all on ability to carry out normal day to day activities even if it is not substantial, so long as there is eventually likely to be a substantial adverse effect; and

People with cancer, HIV, or multiple sclerosis are deemed to be disabled people from the point of diagnosis, regardless of whether or not they have any symptoms.

Are any conditions not covered?

Yes, the following conditions specifically do not count as impairments:

Addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless resulting from the substance being medically prescribed);

Seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hay fever) unless it aggravates the effect of another condition;

Tendency to set fires, or steal, or physically or sexually abuse other persons;

Exhibitionism and voyeurism;

Severe disfigurements consisting of tattoos, non-medical body piercing or attachments to such piercing are not treated as having substantial adverse effects.

What if someone has recovered from a disability?

Much of the DDA also applies to people who have had a disability in the past (for example, someone who was disabled by mental ill health) but have now fully recovered. People who were registered disabled under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (NI) 1945 both on 12 January 1995 and 2 December 1996 will be regarded as having had a disability in the past if they do not in any case fall within the definition of the DDA.

Race

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial group.

Sexual Orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) Order 2003 makes it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. In order to monitor the effectiveness of NICS policies information is gathered on sexual orientation. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different sexual orientation.

Marital Status & Dependants

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different marital status and between persons with dependants and persons without.

Use of Monitoring Information

Monitoring information is used to enable the NICS to assess the effectiveness of its EO policies and to determine the impact (if any) of various policies and procedures on different categories of staff. In addition to this internal focus community background and gender information on both staff and applicants is used to complete the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission.

Confidentiality of Monitoring Information

As with other forms of personal data, the obtaining, use, storage and disclosure of monitoring information is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). Monitoring information is held on computer and is protected by a high level of security. Access to this data is restricted to those NICS staff, employees of HRConnect and Trade Union officials whose duties make it necessary for them to have it. Misuse of monitoring information is viewed as a disciplinary offence.

The confidentiality of community background information is also protected through regulations made under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (FETO). These make it a criminal offence, subject to specific exceptions, for an employer or employee to disclose information on the community background of an individual which has been obtained or used for the purposes of monitoring under FETO.

The release of an individual's monitoring information is permitted by legislation as part of prospective or actual proceedings under equality legislation, e.g. where another individual has made a complaint of alleged discrimination.

Many people from all backgrounds in Northern Ireland and beyond are interested in the profile of the NICS workforce and the candidates who apply for jobs. For this reason the NICS regularly publishes data in the form of statistical summaries, graphs etc. On occasions it may also be necessary to use monitoring information to answer questions from Assembly Members, MPs and MEPs or to respond to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act. In all cases where information is made public, the format of presentation will be such that it will not be possible to identify any individual's information.

ANNEX A

Nationality

(i) 'UK National' means a person who is a British citizen (including persons from the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man), a British subject under Part IV of the British Nationality Act 1981 having the right of abode in the UK or a British Dependent Territories citizen acquiring his/her citizenship from connection with Gibraltar.

(ii) 'Commonwealth Citizen' means any person who has the status of a Commonwealth citizen under the British Nationality Act 1981, not covered by the 'UK Nationality' definition above. This includes British Dependent Territories citizens (other than Gibraltarians), British Overseas citizens, and from 1986 those persons in the category British National (Overseas).

(iii) 'British Protected Person' means a member of any class of persons declared to be British Protected Persons by Order in Council under the British Nationality Act 1981, or by virtue of the Solomon Islands Act 1978.

(iv) 'EEA National' means a national of one of the following countries:

Austria	France	Liechtenstein	**Romania
Belgium	Germany	Lithuania	Slovakia
**Bulgaria	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Cyprus	Hungary	Malta	Spain
Czech Republic	Iceland	Netherlands	Sweden
Denmark	Ireland	Norway	United Kingdom
Estonia	Italy	Poland	
Finland	Latvia	Portugal	

N.B. nationals from Switzerland also have the same free movement and employment rights.

'Family member of an EEA national' means:

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

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

** Non-exempt Bulgarian and Romanian nationals are required to be registered under the Worker Authorisation Scheme prior to appointment.

Guidance on this can be obtained from the Home Office website www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

ANNEX B

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

CSC NI
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

AN INTRODUCTION

Ensuring appointment on merit
And safeguarding ethics

WHO ARE WE?

Brenda McLaughlin, CBE (Chairperson)
Ruth Laird
Tony Hopkins, CBE
Vilma Patterson, MBE
Dr Raymond Mullan, OBE
Marion Matchett, CBE

LOCATION

Our Office is in Windsor House.
The full address is:

5th Floor
Windsor House
Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7SR

OPENING HOURS

The Office is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm,
Monday to Friday, except Public and Bank Holidays.

How to contact us

- write to us at the address at the top of the page
- telephone us on **028 9054 9151**
- fax us at **028 9054 9414**
- visit us at www.nicscommissioners.org

Annex B

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

WHAT ARE WE HERE TO DO?

Civil Service Commissioners are appointed by the Crown to uphold the principle that selection for appointment to posts in the Civil Service should be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

WHERE DO WE GET OUR AUTHORITY FROM?

Commissioners derived their responsibilities from prerogative Orders made by the Secretary of State. Our authority currently derives from the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

We do it by:

- making General Regulations.
- publishing and maintaining a Recruitment Code setting out the essential principles and procedures on which recruitment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service must be based. Departments and Agencies must follow this Code. A copy is available online at: www.nicscommissioners.org
- it is inevitable that occasions will arise when special circumstances lead to Departments needing to depart from the Merit Principle. The Commissioners have set out the circumstances in which they are prepared to look at requests to depart from the Merit Principle. These 'exceptions' must be notified to, and in some instances approved by, the Commissioners before an appointment can be made.
- auditing recruitment policies and practices followed by Departments and Agencies in making appointment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Each year, the Commissioners decide on a particular aspect of recruitment to examine in detail (an audit) and request management consultants to carry out independent investigations on their behalf. The results of these audits are published in the Commissioners' Annual Report.
- requiring Departments and Agencies to publish information about their recruitment activity.

- approving procedures for appointment, through open competition, to the Senior Civil Service in Northern Ireland.
- hearing and determining appeals under the Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics. Under the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999, we have been assigned the role of providing an independent appeals mechanism for Northern Ireland civil servants. The Code of Ethics sets out the constitutional framework within which civil servants work and the values they are expected to uphold. Details of the number and nature of the appeals received by the Commissioners are published each year in our Annual Report.

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

If you have ever applied for a post in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, you can be assured that, whether or not you were successful, the Department or Agency was obliged to make that appointment in accordance with directions for good practice set out by the Commissioners.

We are concerned that civil servants are not fully aware of the appeals mechanism under the Code of Ethics. We would strongly encourage any civil servant who believes that he or she has been asked to act in a way which

- is illegal, improper or unethical;
- is in breach of constitutional convention or a professional code;
- may involve a possible maladministration; or
- is otherwise inconsistent with the Code

to report the matter in accordance with procedures laid down in the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pay and Conditions Code or Departmental guidance.

Where the matter has been reported in the appropriate manner and a civil servant believes the response does not represent a reasonable response to his or her concerns, s/he may report the matter in writing to the Civil Service Commissioners.

**Candidate
Information
Booklet**

IRC149705

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First
Minister (OFMDFM)**

**Legislative Counsel - Grade 5
(3 Posts)**

**Completed Application Forms
must be returned to HRConnect
no later than 12 noon (UK time)
on
Friday, 24 August 2012**

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

**Creating opportunity, releasing
potential, achieving excellence.**

Communication between HRConnect and you

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

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FOREWORD

The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) is at the heart of the devolved government in Northern Ireland. Within OFMDFM the Office of the Legislative Counsel works closely with all of the government departments, assisting Ministers and officials to deliver the Northern Ireland Executive's legislative programme by translating policy into legislation. The Office of the Legislative Counsel also works closely with the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel in Whitehall and has links with drafters in other jurisdictions.

The Office is based in Belfast, in Parliament Buildings, where the Northern Ireland Assembly sits. Members of the Office work closely with officials in the Northern Ireland Assembly to ensure the successful passage of Bills through the Assembly.

The quality of the drafting work that you have already done is important to us. We are looking for someone who can point to a track record of achievement in their drafting career to date. But we are also looking for someone with ambition to keep developing. We offer you the flexibility and challenge of working across a variety of subject areas, enabling you to broaden and develop your experience at an exciting time of growing demand for your work.

We are open to discussion about alternative work patterns that support a healthy work-life balance as part of a competitive reward package for the role.

These posts may be filled by the secondment of the successful candidates from their current posts.

Where the successful candidate has to relocate home in order to take up appointment, the Department will consider the reimbursement of reasonable expenses (in part or full) as a result of the relocation.

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply may contact Anne Birch by telephoning 02890 528189 or e-mail anne.birch@ofmdfmni.gov.uk.

Thank you for your interest.

Brenda King
First Legislative Counsel

BACKGROUND

Context

The Office of the Legislative Counsel is a specialised team of lawyers based at Parliament Buildings, Belfast. Their main task is drafting Bills for the Northern Ireland Executive, (the Executive) for introduction into the Northern Ireland Assembly, (the Assembly). They also work with Parliamentary Counsel in Whitehall to ensure the correct application to Northern Ireland of Westminster Bills. The Office of the Legislative Counsel is responsible for the Statutory Publications Office for Northern Ireland.

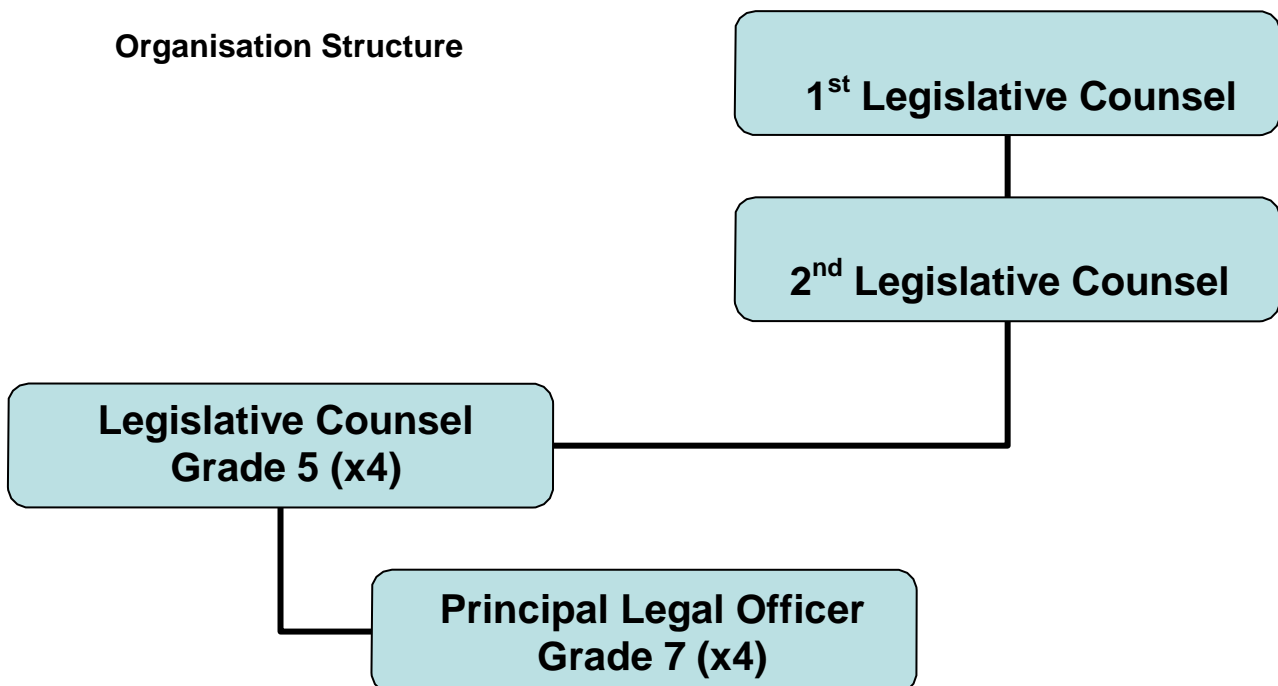
Executive Bills are drafted to give effect to policy instructions from the Northern Ireland department concerned. The legislative programme is agreed by Ministers. The functions of legislative counsel include the clarification and detailed working out with administrators of the policy to be given effect by the Bill. Counsel are then responsible for selecting the conceptual and legislative structures appropriate for this purpose and for drafting the legislation necessary to give effect to the policy.

The work includes drafting and advising on amendments to Bills in their passage through the Assembly and co-operating with Assembly officials in the passage of Bills.

Senior drafters will frequently work alone on a Bill; experienced drafters will however be involved in mentoring, training and developing more junior counsel.

Counsel are expected to deal with a Bill on any subject, though specialisation within the Office is encouraged. Bills often have to be prepared under pressure generated either by the need to adhere to the agreed Executive legislative programme of Ministers or by the urgency of the subject-matter of a particular Bill.

Organisation Structure



JOB DESCRIPTION

Appointments

There are currently 3 vacancies within the Office of the Legislative Counsel. These are permanent appointments to the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Senior Civil Service and the successful appointees will be employees of the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

The merit list resulting from this competition will be valid for a period of one year from the date the interviews are completed.

These posts may be filled by the secondment of the successful candidates from their current posts.

It is advisable that candidates interested in the secondment option make their employers aware that, under the NICS secondment arrangements, the successful candidate will remain an employee of their current employer. The necessary administrative arrangements will be agreed between the Department and the employer before secondment commences.

Salary

The salary for the post will be within the range £57,300 - £116,000 within which annual pay progression will be in conformance with the NICS annual pay review. Starting salary above the minimum of the pay scale may be available where it is considered appropriate, taking account of relevant experience and/or qualifications.

If the successful candidate is an existing civil servant, normal pay on promotion arrangements will apply.

Where the successful candidate has to relocate home in order to take up appointment, the Department may consider the reimbursement of reasonable expenses (in part or full) as a result of the relocation.

In order to comply with Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) guidance, salaries of the Senior Civil Service are disclosable, including any taxable benefits in kind and pension, in our annual accounts. We may also have to disclose additional information should DFP guidance change. As a condition of appointment, the successful candidate must agree to this disclosure.

Location

The post holders will be based at Parliament Buildings, Belfast.

Working Hours

In common with all SCS appointments, the post holders will be required to work outside their normal conditioned hours, where it is necessary, to fulfil the demands of the post.

Holidays

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

Pensions

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pension package. Further details of this can be found on pages 19 and 20 of this booklet.

Further Information

If you have any questions about the competition process, you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email: recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Drafting requires an analytical mind, imagination and the ability to express oneself clearly on paper.

The main duties of the post will include:

- analysing and clarifying policy proposals of instructing government departments;
- selecting conceptual and legislative structures appropriate to deliver policy objectives;
- drafting Bills to give effect to policy objectives;
- facilitating passage of Bills through the Assembly, including drafting amendments and co-operating with Assembly officials;
- providing advice to government departments on legislative and related constitutional matters;
- liaising with Parliamentary Counsel in Whitehall to ensure the correct application to Northern Ireland of Westminster Bills; and
- mentoring, training and developing more junior counsel.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications:

1. Hold a professional legal qualification; barrister, solicitor or equivalent.

AND

2. Have at least 7 years' experience in drafting primary legislation.

AND

3. Have drafted primary legislation which demonstrates the applicant's ability to –

- a) make a significant contribution to the work of a drafting office at a senior level;
- b) produce constructive ideas to assist with policy development;
- c) carry a substantial workload while maintaining a high standard of drafting;
- d) deliver high quality legislation within a demanding timetable;
- e) work without, or with very little, supervision.

AND

4. Applicants must provide (preferably accessed by way of website links rather than otherwise) 5 substantial examples of their work which demonstrate the abilities mentioned in eligibility criterion 3 (a) to (e). These must be examples of the applicant's own work which have been introduced in, or enacted by, a legislature.

PLEASE NOTE:

These examples will be considered by the selection panel in determining eligibility in respect of eligibility criterion 3 and, if necessary, the shortlisting criterion, (see below). The selection panel will also draw on these examples at interview.

Applicants should provide website links for the 5 examples on their application form, however if the examples are not available online they should be sent, marked with the competition reference number (IRC149705) and the candidate's full name, for the attention of Mark McAuley to:

**HRConnect
PO BOX 1089
2nd Floor, Metro Building
6-9 Donegall Square South
Belfast
BT1 9EW**

Or by email to: recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net

You cannot attach this information to the online application form.

Where this information is not provided by the closing date, the application form will be treated as incomplete, and will not be forwarded to the selection panel for consideration.

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

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

SHORTLISTING CRITERION

In addition applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to interview, the following shortlisting criterion will be used:

1. Evidence of ability to deal with a variety of demanding topics simultaneously.

Please note:

- You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.
- It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.
- The Department will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.
- If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.
- **ONLY** the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history, eligibility and shortlisting criteria) and your 5 examples (if website links are not provided) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post.
- The Department may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information available, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Northern Ireland Civil Service has adopted the Professional Skills for Government as a framework for the purpose of personal and professional development

What is the PSG competency framework?

The Professional Skills for Government (PSG) competency framework is a structured way of thinking about jobs and careers for Civil Service staff at all grades. It sets out the skills you need to do your job well as a member of the Civil Service, no matter what grade you are or where you work.

How does the PSG framework look?

The PSG competency framework is divided into the following separate but supporting areas:

5. **Leadership** - Civil Service leadership qualities sit at the centre of the framework. These are to:
 - provide direction for the organisation
 - deliver results
 - build capacity for the organisation to address current and future challenges
 - act with integrity
2. **Core skills** - Every civil servant needs certain core skills to work effectively. At Senior Civil Service level the core skills are:
 - people management - evidence of developing team capability in line with the business plan and organisational vision; managing change effectively and promoting best practice
 - financial management – evidence of planning, agreeing and monitoring the delivery of financial targets, and of identifying and implementing innovative ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources and assets
 - strategic thinking – evidence of influencing the organisation's strategy and priorities, and managing the tensions arising from conflicting organisational priorities, wider policy environment and operational constraints
 - analysis and use of evidence – evidence of ensuring that the evidence base for the strategy and work of the organisation is open to critical challenge and inspires the confidence of stakeholders
 - programme and project management – evidence of responsibility for the definition and successful delivery of programme/project benefits, managing risks and communicating effectively with stakeholders

- communications and marketing – evidence of aligning policy and delivery with clear communications objectives, taking into account the wider organisational communications agenda

3. **Professional skills**

- Job-specific professional skills are related to the work you do. Everyone in the Civil Service requires some professional skills to do their job, whether they work in policy development, operational delivery or corporate services, or provide expert advice (for example, scientists, economists and communicators). This area of the PSG competency framework is supported by Heads of Profession, who set standards for all professions in the Civil Service.

Further information on the Professional Skills for Government framework as it applies to this post can be obtained by accessing

<http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/improving/psg/skills>

This link will take you directly to the Professional Skills for Government skills identifier tool.

Step 1

Please click on Leadership tab

Then click on ' Grade 6, 7 and Senior Civil Service

The leadership qualities required for this grade will then be displayed.

Step 2

Please click on Core Skills tab

Then click on Deputy Director (SCS pay band 1)

The core skills required for this grade will then be displayed.

INTERVIEW CRITERIA

Candidates who satisfy the eligibility criteria and where necessary the shortlisting criterion, will be invited to participate in the next stage of the selection process.

PRESENTATION

Before interview candidates will be required to deliver a short presentation lasting no longer than 7 minutes. Candidates will be advised of the presentation topic 30 minutes before interview. A choice of writing materials and a flip-chart will be available to assist in preparations. No personal documentation may be brought in to the pre-interview room. A Flip Chart stand will also be available in the interview room to enable candidates to present the prepared information. The only materials candidates will be permitted to bring into interview will be flip-chart sheets or written material prepared in the pre-interview room.

The presentation will be used to contribute to the Professional Skills, Strategic Thinking and Communications and Marketing Competences. Please see below.

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEW

The following section outlines the Professional Skills for Government framework as it applies to this role and will be the basis for assessment at interview.

KEY COMPETENCES

In addition to satisfying the eligibility criteria and where necessary the shortlisting criterion, applicants will also be expected to display the following qualities and skills at interview:

1. Professional Skills

Evidence of securing, maintaining, developing and applying relevant legal knowledge and expertise and providing a linking role between lawyers and policy makers.

(Marks available 50, minimum standard 30)

2. Leadership

Evidence of providing direction, delivering results, building capacity to address current and future challenges and acting with integrity.

(Marks available 20)

3. People Management

Evidence of achieving organisational aims through the engagement, development and leadership of staff and influencing clients and other stakeholders.

(Marks available 20)

4. Financial Management

Evidence of managing resources effectively and an awareness of the principles of government finance.

(Marks available 10)

5. Strategic Thinking

Evidence of contributing to the development of strategy, policy and priorities and identifying risks and difficulties that have to be managed.

(Marks available 30)

6. Analysis and Use of Evidence

Evidence of working guided and informed by research and robust analysis of information provided by clients and others; communicating effectively with clients and other stakeholders.

(Marks available 20)

7. Programme and Project Management

Evidence of effective project planning in relation to legislative and other projects.

(Marks available 20)

8. Communications and Marketing

Evidence of identifying and sharing information on issues affecting clients and other stakeholders in a manner that is readily understood by both lawyers and non-lawyers.

(Marks available 30)

PASS MARK

The overall pass mark for the competition will be 120 (60%) of a possible 200. Within this overall pass mark, a minimum individual pass mark of 30 (60%) out of 50 must be obtained against the Professional Skills criterion.

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Belfast on 22 and 24 October 2012.

INTERVIEW GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

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

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

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

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

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

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

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

SELECTION PROCESS

The Merit Principle

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

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

Making your application:

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

Guidance for Applicants

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms, unless it is specifically requested in the application form and candidate information booklet, eg an organisational chart.
- Should an organisational chart be required this must be submitted to HRConnect by the closing date for applications.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline;
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.

Application Form Submission

- Please refer to the Candidate Information Booklet before completing an application.
- **All** parts of the application form **must** be completed by the applicant before this application can be considered. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.
- All applications must be received by the advertised closing date. Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted. Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is also the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to HRConnect. HRConnect will not accept any application where they are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.
- Only the employment history, eligibility and shortlisting sections will be made available to the panel.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, all requests for hard copy application packs are welcomed and all applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.
- 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.
- Please note - 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.
- Please do not attempt to reformat application forms as this will result in disqualification.

Changes in personal circumstances

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances.

Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account 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.

Merit List

The merit list resulting from this competition will be valid for a period of one year from the date the interviews are completed.

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.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

Please note, this form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it will result in disqualification.

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to page 22.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.

Assessment Information

It is HRConnect policy that all candidates invited to attend for assessment bring sufficient documentation to satisfy the eligibility/shortlisting criteria and the Nationality and Vetting requirements. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for assessment.

You should ensure that these documents are readily available.

Nationality Requirements

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. These posts are classified as Non-Public Service, therefore certain nationality requirements apply. Applicants must be either:

- (xxxi) A UK national; or
- (xxxii) A Commonwealth citizen; or
- (xxxiii) A British Protected Person; or
- (xxxiv) An EEA national; or
- (xxxv) A Swiss National; or
- (xxxvi) A person who is not an EEA or Swiss national, but is a family member of an EEA national who has moved to the UK from another EEA Member State for an approved purpose.

For further guidance on Nationality requirements please see Annex A.

Advice on Nationality for (i), (ii) and (iii) above may be obtained from the Home Office website, www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Vetting Procedures

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For these posts in the NICS the level of vetting is a Baseline Standard. For this check you will be required to provide the following:

- u) Your passport OR
- v) 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).
- w) Other acceptable documents are listed on www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.
- x) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

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

Basic Disclosure Certificate

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

For more information, the address of the AccessNI website is: <http://www.accessni.gov.uk/>. Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by HRConnect, normally after interview/test, and will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form. This can be downloaded from the AccessNI website. Guidance notes of the completion of the form are also included on the website. Please note that a request to complete this form should not be seen as a guarantee of an offer of appointment. Failure to complete the above form and return it within the specified time will be regarded as 'no longer interested in the position' and your application will be withdrawn.

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

Order of Merit

The selection panel will assess candidates against the interview criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The selection panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed. The order of merit is valid for one year.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Pensions:

New entrants who join the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) are eligible to join the NICS pension scheme, the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI) [PCSPS(NI)] – NUVOS arrangement. Pension is an important part of the reward package for civil servants and, on average, employers pay more than 18% of pay towards pension costs. As well as providing you with an easy and secure way to help you provide for your retirement, the PCSPS(NI) also provides dependants and ill health benefits.

We offer all new employees the choice of either:

- **Nuvos** - a high quality, index-linked defined benefit pension scheme with a tiered member contribution rate. From 1 April 2012 an individual's contribution rate will be determined by their annual full-time equivalent rate of pensionable earnings. The table below shows the contributions payable.

Full-time pay range	Contribution rate 2012-13
Up to £15,000pa	3.5%
£15,001 - £21,000	4.1%
£21,001 - £30,000	4.7%
£30,001 - £50,000	5.1%
£50,001 - £60,000	5.5%
Over £60,000	5.9%

Your employing Department also makes contributions; or

- **Partnership** - a stakeholder type money purchase arrangement with an employer contribution. The employer basic contribution is based on your age, and this is paid regardless of whether you choose to contribute. You do not have to contribute if you do not wish to, but if you do your employing Department will match your contributions up to an additional 3% of pay. Your employing Department will also pay a further contribution, of 0.8% of pay, to the PCSPS(NI) to cover you for Death in Service benefits.

If you previously worked for an employer covered by the PCSPS(NI) arrangements, different conditions and contribution rates may apply. These can be viewed under the Questions and Answers document on the Civil Service Pensions website at:

http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni/employees_pension_notice_21_february_2012.pdf

If you already have a PCSPS(NI) pension in payment, you should be aware that the pension scheme rules prevent members from receiving more by way of pay and pension combined on re-employment than they were earning as salary before they retired. This is called “abatement”. If you want to know more about how this may affect you, please contact Civil Service Pensions at:

Waterside House,
75 Duke Street,
Londonderry,
BT47 6FP;
Tel: 028 7131 9000;
Email: cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk

If you left the NICS with an early retirement, severance or redundancy package then your existing benefits may be affected if you accept this post. If your service was enhanced (increased) when you left then you will not be able to build up benefits in the defined benefit scheme during the period that is covered by the enhancement included in your existing benefits. If you opt to join the Partnership arrangement, employer contributions will not be payable for this enhancement period but you will be able to contribute if you wish. If you are receiving a pension or annual compensation payment then this may be reduced during your re-employment. If you received a top-up payment under the early severance temporary arrangements then your pay may be reduced during your re-employment. If you want to know more about this, please contact Civil Service Pensions.

You may be able to transfer a pension with your current or a previous employer into the PCSPS(NI). Information on Transfers In can be found in the New Entrant Pack which you should receive on taking up employment.

Feedback

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

THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Completed application forms should be sent to the HRConnect Recruitment Team:

HRConnect
PO Box 1089
2nd Floor
The Metro Building
6-9 Donegall Square South
Belfast
BT1 9EW

NOTE: Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted.

Contact Details:

If you have any queries regarding the competition process please contact HRConnect at the address above or by:

Email: Recruitment@HRConnect.nigov.net
Tel: 0800 1 300 330
Fax: 028 9024 1665

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Policy Statement

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equal Opportunities Policy statement is set out below.

“The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is committed to providing equality of opportunity. It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the NICS on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which all workers are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated. This right is protected in many instances by legislation.

In order to provide a high quality service to the people of Northern Ireland the NICS needs to recruit, retain and promote the best available people. Our equal opportunities policy is central to this strategy. We aim to foster a culture which encourages every member of staff to develop his or her full potential and which rewards achievement. Creating a working environment where individual differences are valued and respected enables all staff to give of their best and helps us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve.

The NICS seeks to maintain the confidence of the whole community. It will continue to promote equality of opportunity and fair participation within the framework of the law and will strive to achieve a workforce that is broadly representative of the society which it serves.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to apply this policy. Both Management and Trade Union Side are fully committed to the policy and will endeavour to ensure its full implementation.”

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Equality monitoring is the process of collecting, storing and analysing information that is relevant to and necessary for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity between different categories of persons. This section sets out what information is collected, the reasons for doing so and what it is used for.

You should note that the Monitoring Form is regarded as part of your application and failure to fully complete and return it will result in disqualification. The Monitoring Form will be processed separately and neither the form nor the details contained in it will be available to those considering your application.

Legislative Context

This section explains the reasons for gathering this information by setting out the legislative background.

Gender

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended) makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of his or her sex. Information on gender is also necessary to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return, as required by the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between men and women generally.

Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 make it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on grounds of age. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different age.

Community Background

The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 outlaws discrimination on the basis of religious belief or political opinion. The information requested in the Community Background section of the monitoring form is required in connection with the requirements of the above Order and to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission for NI.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief and political opinion. Following guidance issued in July 2007 by the Equality Commission for NI the NICS has decided to use “community background” information as a proxy for political opinion.

Disability

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) provides protection for disabled persons against discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The DDA defines disability as a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

This definition is interpreted as follows:-

Physical Impairment: this includes, for instance, a weakening of part of the body (eyes, ears, limbs, internal organs etc) caused through illness by

accident or from birth. Examples would be blindness, deafness, paralysis of a leg or heart disease.

Mental Impairment: this includes mental ill health and what is commonly known as learning disability.

Substantial: put simply, this means the effect of the physical or mental impairment on ability to carry out normal day to day activities is more than minor or trivial. It does not have to be a severe effect.

Long-term adverse effect: the effect has to have lasted or be likely to last overall for at least 12 months and the effect must be a detrimental one. A person with a life expectancy of less than 12 months is of course covered if the effect is likely to last for the whole of that time.

A normal day to day activity: this is something which is carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis such as washing, eating, catching a bus or turning on a television. It does not mean something so individual as playing a musical instrument to a professional standard or doing everything involved in a particular job.

What sort of effect must there be?

The person must be affected in at least one of the respects listed in the DDA: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech; hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; or perception of risk of physical danger.

What happens if the effects are reduced by medication or other treatment?

Broadly speaking, the effects that matter are those that would be present if there was no medication or treatment taking place. The exception is people who wear spectacles or contact lenses when what matters is the effect that remain while the spectacles or contact lenses are being used.

Are there any types of condition covered by special provisions in the DDA?

Yes, because some people with particular conditions might not otherwise be counted as disabled. These are provisions covering:

Recurring or fluctuating conditions such as arthritis, where the effects can sometimes be less than substantial, which are treated as continuing to have a substantial adverse effect so long as that effect is likely to recur;

Conditions which progressively deteriorate, such as motor neuron disease, which count as having a substantial effect from the first time they have any effect at all on ability to carry out normal day to day activities even if it is not substantial, so long as there is eventually likely to be a substantial adverse effect; and

People with cancer, HIV, or multiple sclerosis are deemed to be disabled people from the point of diagnosis, regardless of whether or not they have any symptoms.

Are any conditions not covered?

Yes, the following conditions specifically do not count as impairments:

Addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless resulting from the substance being medically prescribed);

Seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hay fever) unless it aggravates the effect of another condition;

Tendency to set fires, or steal, or physically or sexually abuse other persons;

Exhibitionism and voyeurism;

Severe disfigurements consisting of tattoos, non-medical body piercing or attachments to such piercing are not treated as having substantial adverse effects.

What if someone has recovered from a disability?

Much of the DDA also applies to people who have had a disability in the past (for example, someone who was disabled by mental ill health) but have now fully recovered. People who were registered disabled under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (NI) 1945 both on 12 January 1995 and 2 December 1996 will be regarded as having had a disability in the past if they do not in any case fall within the definition of the DDA.

Race

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial group.

Sexual Orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 make it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. In order to monitor the effectiveness of NICS policies information is gathered on sexual orientation. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different sexual orientation.

Marital Status & Dependants

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different marital status and between persons with dependants and persons without.

Use of Monitoring Information

Monitoring information is used to enable the NICS to assess the effectiveness of its EO policies and to determine the impact (if any) of various policies and procedures on different categories of staff. In addition to this internal focus community background and gender information on both staff and applicants is used to complete the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission.

Confidentiality of Monitoring Information

As with other forms of personal data, the obtaining, use, storage and disclosure of monitoring information is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998. Monitoring information is held on computer and is protected by a high level of security. Access to this data is restricted to those NICS staff, employees of HRConnect and Trade Union officials whose duties make it necessary for them to have it. Misuse of monitoring information is viewed as a disciplinary offence.

The confidentiality of community background information is also protected through regulations made under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (FETO). These make it a criminal offence, subject to specific exceptions, for an employer or employee to disclose information on the community background of an individual which has been obtained or used for the purposes of monitoring under FETO.

The release of an individual's monitoring information is permitted by legislation as part of prospective or actual proceedings under equality legislation, e.g. where another individual has made a complaint of alleged discrimination.

Many people from all backgrounds in Northern Ireland and beyond are interested in the profile of the NICS workforce and the candidates who apply for jobs. For this reason the NICS regularly publishes data in the form of statistical summaries, graphs etc. On occasions it may also be necessary to use monitoring information to answer questions from Assembly Members, MPs and MEPs or to respond to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act. In all cases where information is made public, the format of presentation will be such that it will not be possible to identify any individual's information.

ANNEX A

Nationality

(i) 'UK National' means a person who is a British citizen (including persons from the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man), a British subject under Part IV of the British Nationality Act 1981 having the right of abode in the UK or a British Dependent Territories citizen acquiring his/her citizenship from connection with Gibraltar.

(ii) 'Commonwealth Citizen' means any person who has the status of a Commonwealth citizen under the British Nationality Act 1981, not covered by the 'UK Nationality' definition above. This includes British Dependent Territories citizens (other than Gibraltarians), British Overseas citizens, and from 1986 those persons in the category British National (Overseas).

(iii) 'British Protected Person' means a member of any class of persons declared to be British Protected Persons by Order in Council under the British Nationality Act 1981, or by virtue of the Solomon Islands Act 1978.

(iv) 'EEA National' means a national of one of the following countries:

Austria	France	Liechtenstein	**Romania
Belgium	Germany	Lithuania	Slovakia
**Bulgaria	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Cyprus	Hungary	Malta	Spain
Czech Republic	Iceland	Netherlands	Sweden
Denmark	Ireland	Norway	United Kingdom
Estonia	Italy	Poland	
Finland	Latvia	Portugal	

N.B. nationals from Switzerland also have the same free movement and employment rights.

'Family member of an EEA national' means:

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

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

** Non-exempt Bulgarian and Romanian nationals are required to be registered under the Worker Authorisation Scheme prior to appointment. Guidance on this can be obtained from the Home Office website www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

ANNEX B

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

CSC NI

**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

AN INTRODUCTION

**Ensuring appointment on merit
And safeguarding ethics**

WHO ARE WE?

Brian Rowntree, CBE (Chairperson)
Vilma Patterson, MBE
Dr Raymond Mullan, OBE
Marian Matchett, CBE
Jim Scholes

LOCATION

**Our Office is in Windsor House.
The full address is:**

**5th Floor
Windsor House
Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7SR**

OPENING HOURS

**The Office is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm,
Monday to Friday, except Public and Bank Holidays.**

How to contact us

- **write to us at the address at the top of the page**
- **telephone us on 028 9054 9151**
- **fax us at 028 9054 9414**
- **visit us at www.nicscommissioners.org**

Annex B CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

WHAT ARE WE HERE TO DO?

Civil Service Commissioners are appointed by the Crown to uphold the principle that selection for appointment to posts in the Civil Service should be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

WHERE DO WE GET OUR AUTHORITY FROM?

Commissioners derived their responsibilities from prerogative Orders made by the Secretary of State. Our authority currently derives from the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

We do it by:

- making General Regulations.
- publishing and maintaining a Recruitment Code setting out the essential principles and procedures on which recruitment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service must be based. Departments and Agencies must follow this Code. A copy is available online at: www.nicscommissioners.org
- it is inevitable that occasions will arise when special circumstances lead to Departments needing to depart from the Merit Principle. The Commissioners have set out the circumstances in which they are prepared to look at requests to depart from the Merit Principle. These 'exceptions' must be notified to, and in some instances approved by, the Commissioners before an appointment can be made.
- auditing recruitment policies and practices followed by Departments and Agencies in making appointment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Each year, the Commissioners decide on a particular aspect of recruitment to examine in detail (an audit) and request management consultants to carry out independent investigations on their behalf. The results of these audits are published in the Commissioners' Annual Report.
- requiring Departments and Agencies to publish information about their recruitment activity.

- approving procedures for appointment, through open competition, to the Senior Civil Service in Northern Ireland.
- hearing and determining appeals under the Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics. Under the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999, we have been assigned the role of providing an independent appeals mechanism for Northern Ireland civil servants. The Code of Ethics sets out the constitutional framework within which civil servants work and the values they are expected to uphold. Details of the number and nature of the appeals received by the Commissioners are published each year in our Annual Report.

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

If you have ever applied for a post in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, you can be assured that, whether or not you were successful, the Department or Agency was obliged to make that appointment in accordance with directions for good practice set out by the Commissioners.

We are concerned that civil servants are not fully aware of the appeals mechanism under the Code of Ethics. We would strongly encourage any civil servant who believes that he or she has been asked to act in a way which

- is illegal, improper or unethical;
- is in breach of constitutional convention or a professional code;
- may involve a possible maladministration; or
- is otherwise inconsistent with the Code

to report the matter in accordance with procedures laid down in the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pay and Conditions Code or Departmental guidance.

Where the matter has been reported in the appropriate manner and a civil servant believes the response does not represent a reasonable response to his or her concerns, s/he may report the matter in writing to the Civil Service Commissioners.