

**Candidate  
Information  
Booklet**

**IRC292727  
Inspector Group 2 - Agriculture**

**Department of Agriculture,  
Environment and Rural Affairs**

**Completed Application Forms  
must be submitted to  
HRConnect no later than 12  
noon (UK time) on  
*Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2023***

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

Department of Agriculture, Environment and  
Rural Affairs (DAERA)

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

### Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible. You should therefore **provide an email address that you have 24/7 access to** and check your email account, including junk mail folder, regularly 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. **If you change your email address then it is your responsibility to inform HRConnect.**

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## FOREWORD

The NICS comprises nine departments that support the Northern Ireland Executive and Ministers. We do this by developing and implementing government policies and legislation and delivering key public services in areas such as health public finances, social development, justice, education, regeneration, environment, culture, agriculture, economic development, employment and transport. In addition, the Public Prosecution Service is a non-Ministerial Department staffed by Civil Servants.

DAERA has a vision of “Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.” Our vision is the foundation of everything we do as we seek to enhance our environment; grow a sustainable, vibrant economy; and support the development of thriving rural communities. At the heart of our vision is a desire to make DAERA a great place to work, with engaged people delivering a twenty-first century agenda.

The successful candidates will work within the Agricultural Inspectorate profession which is a group of professional and technical staff that use their knowledge and expertise in a wide range of roles across DAERA in the delivery of education, advisory, inspection and technology service to support the agri-food and plant health industries.

We are particularly looking for professional and technical people with a track record of delivery, decision making, leadership, and an ability to develop strong partnerships within their organisations and with stakeholders.

If you have the professional and technical skills we need and share our commitment to public service, we would love to hear from you.

Thank you for your interest

Norman Fulton  
Head of Agricultural Inspectorate Profession

## **Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs**

**OUR VISION: “Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.”**

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs employs some 3,000 people over 230 sites across NI, utilising some £579 million Resource and £95m Capital budget per annum. It owns almost 85,000 hectares of land and has operations right across all of our landscapes, including marine, watercourses, uplands and farming lands.

DAERA has responsibility for environment, food, farming, fisheries, forestry, rural development and sustainability policy. The Department supports the development of thriving rural communities; the conservation and enhancement of the environment; the sustainable development of the agri-food industry, having regard for the needs of the consumers, the protection of human, animal and plant health and the welfare of animals; the development of the fisheries sector; and the development of our forested land.

Through the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), the Department has responsibility for creating prosperity and wellbeing by environmental regulation. DAERA provides a Knowledge Advisory Service - a business development service for farmers and growers, and a veterinary service for administration of animal health and welfare. The Department's College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) delivers training and further and higher education courses in the agri-food sector.

### **DAERA's Strategic Outcomes**

- Sustainable agri-food, fisheries, forestry and industrial sector;
- A clean, healthy environment, benefiting people, nature and the economy;
- A thriving rural economy, contributing to prosperity and wellbeing; and
- A well-led, high performing organisation focused on outcomes.

### **DAERA Top Management Group comprises:-**

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

### **DAERA has two Executive Agencies:**

- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
- Forest Service

The Department also sponsors a number of non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) including the Agri-food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI).

The Permanent Secretary of DAERA is Katrina Godfrey.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **FOOD AND FARMING GROUP**

Food and Farming Group (FFG) is responsible for the following high-profile DAERA wide programmes and initiatives:

- Development of Departmental policy and programmes to support growth in the agri-food sector;
- Implementation of policy through inspection, enforcement, licensing, certification, advice and guidance relating to agriculture, horticulture, food and countryside management;
- Delivery of schemes and measures to support the agri-food sector;
- Development and implementation of DAERA policy on the skills and competence development of people wishing to enter or already working in the Northern Ireland agri-food industry and rural community; and
- Commissioning and management of the Department's science programme sponsorship of the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute.

### **The College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise**

CAFRE is a Division within the FFG and has three campuses at Enniskillen, Greenmount (Antrim) and Loughry (Cookstown).

The College contributes to DAERA's aims and goals through the delivery of education, knowledge transfer and innovation programmes to benefit the Northern Ireland agri-food industry.

### **Further and Higher Education programmes**

The current portfolio of full-time and part-time courses offered by CAFRE includes:

- Level 2 through to Honours Degree in Agriculture.
- Level 2 through to Honours Degree in Equine Studies.
- Level 2 through to Honours Degrees in Food Technology, Food Innovation & Nutrition and Food Business Management.
- Level 2 through to Honours Degree in Horticulture.
- Level 3 in Land-based Engineering.
- Levels 2 and 3 in Veterinary Nursing.
- Postgraduate courses in Business for Agri-Food and Rural Enterprise.

### **Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Schemes**

CAFRE has responsibility for the development and delivery of the Knowledge Transfer elements of the Farm Business Improvement Scheme, which is funded under the RDP. Five knowledge transfer programmes are being delivered, namely Business Development Groups, Farm Family Key Skills, Farm

Innovation Visits, Technology Demonstration Farms and European Innovation Partnerships.

### **Area Based Schemes Division**

Area-based Schemes Division (ASD), also within FFG, exists to ensure the efficient and effective processing of subsidy and grant payments to ensure that regulatory, scheme and timing requirements are met. The Division has 300 staff and is comprised of three Units; Countryside Management Unit, Area-based Schemes Delivery Unit and Area-based Schemes Future Implementation Unit.

Countryside Management Unit carries out controls for DAERA's area based payment schemes and delivers DAERA's agri-environment scheme.

The key aims of CMU include:

- ensuring compliance and control of area based schemes,
- maintaining a GIS mapping system, the Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS),
- delivering agri-environment schemes to mitigate climate change, improve our water quality, protect our heritage, enhance our landscape and reverse the decline in farmland biodiversity,
- reviewing cross compliance, land eligibility and inspection processes,
- advancing the use of new technologies to assist in the Division's work,
- Implementation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.

## **VETERINARY SERVICE ANIMAL HEALTH GROUP (VSAHG)**

VSAHG is responsible for the development of animal health and welfare policy for both farmed and non-farmed animals and the implementation of that policy in respect of farm animals. VSAHG is also responsible for policy development and implementation in respect of food animal identification, imports of livestock and products of animal origin into Northern Ireland, and work with Defra in the export of animals and animal products internationally. VSAHG ensure that the health standards of the farmed animal population are such that the NI producers have the maximum access to all markets, European and overseas, and that production costs associated with poor animal health and welfare are minimised.

VSAHG also supports DAERA and the Food Standards Agency through the implementation, delivery and the enforcement of veterinary public health controls, and agri-food legislation relating to feed and food safety, product certification, marketing standards, labelling, classification and price reporting. In addition VSAHG are responsible for SPS checks at our points of entry to N Ireland.

VSAHG implements a wide range of legislation relating to Animal Feed Safety and Labelling; Beef, Sheep & Pig Carcass Classification; Price Reporting; Beef Labelling; Egg and Poultry meat Marketing Standards; Fertilisers, Lime and Seeds Standards; Food and Feed Cross Compliance; Dairy, Egg and Primary Production Hygiene on behalf of FSA; and provision of technical back-up to the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) for EU Meat and Dairy Market Support Schemes

### **Forest Service – Plant Health Division (PHD)**

Forest Service Plant Health Division delivers plant health and seeds certification functions on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

Forest Service Plant Health Division is responsible for protecting the plant health status of NI whilst facilitating trade in plants and plant products by applying a risk-based approach to Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) controls. The application of these controls are critical to maintaining the plant health status of NI, protecting our natural environment, supporting NI's rural economy and contributing to the wellbeing of society. Forest Service collaborates with the UK Plant Health Service in horizon scanning and managing risks from new and emerging pest threats moving in trade.

The key functions of PHD are to:

Safeguard the plant health status of our land-based industries, forestry and horticulture sectors through implementation and enforcement of an effective plant health regulatory regime and promotes the protection of forests and plants from harmful pests and pathogens.



## TYPICAL KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF INSPECTOR GROUP 2

The primary role of the Inspector Group 2 - Agriculture is to provide inspection, technical and operational support duties and will normally work within a range of positions within DAERA, including Agriculture Inspectors within Area Based Schemes Division, Forest Service - Plant Health Division and Veterinary Service Animal Health Group and Agriculture Instructors and Assistant Farm Managers within CAFRE.

The main duties and responsibilities of the post holders include:

### **Agriculture Inspector**

Agriculture Inspectors (Inspector Group 2) will undertake a range of duties with a focus on:

- providing technical and operational support duties in the delivery of DAERA's Agriculture Payment Schemes and to verify compliance with legislative requirements
- routine delivery of inspections,
- monitoring and surveillance activities,
- enforcement actions in support of statutory requirements for food, feed, animal and plant health,
- compliance with scheme rules and certification of agri-food products for marketing domestically and in export markets
- contribute to emergency responses and contingency plan implementation.

### **Agriculture Instructor**

The primary role of Agriculture Instructors (Inspector Group 2) is to provide technical and operational support duties in respect of CAFRE's Agriculture education programmes.

The role involves the instruction of students in a range of practical Agricultural skills. The skills to be delivered will be listed in the course curriculum and include, for example, livestock husbandry skills relevant to dairy, beef, sheep and pig enterprises, the safe operation of agricultural machinery, and estate maintenance skills.

The duties of the post include: -

1. Plan, prepare and organise practical skills instruction sessions, following the curriculum set by the course awarding body and taking into account the course timetable, availability of resources and the seasonality of farming;
2. Deliver practical skills instruction sessions to ensure all learning outcomes are covered and ensuring the health and safety of students during the instruction session;

3. Assess and record the competence of students, review progress and provide feedback to the students on their performance in completing a range of practical agricultural tasks and skills;

### **Assistant Farm Manager**

The primary role of the Assistant Farm Manager (Inspector Group 2) is to provide support to the Farm Manager in the implementation of the CAFRE College Estate Strategy across the CAFRE Farms Enterprises.

The role involves leading teams of Industrial staff and assisting the Farm Manager with the management of physical and financial resources to meet pre-set targets for each of the CAFRE Farm Enterprises, including the Dairy Centre, Beef and Sheep Centre and Hill Farm Centre at Greenmount Campus and the farm enterprises at Loughry and Enniskillen Campuses.

The duties of the post include:

1. Assisting the Farm Manager with the management of physical and financial resources and recording systems to provide accurate information for staff, students and the industry in line with CAFRE's education, knowledge transfer and innovation programmes;
2. Requirement to work outside normal working hours including, early mornings, evenings, weekends (Saturdays and Sundays) and on public holidays, on a rota basis;
3. Deputising when the Farm Manager is on leave and at weekends/public holidays on a rota basis;
4. Liaising with lecturers, technologists, instructors, farmers and growers to facilitate education, knowledge transfer and innovation programmes;
5. Implementing all relevant health and safety, animal welfare and environmental policies;

### **Other Duties**

Other duties of the Inspector Group 2 - Agriculture posts, in line with the needs of DAERA, including:

- Operate at all times to ensure the health and safety of self and others.
- Requirement to work outside normal working hours including, early mornings, evenings, weekends (Saturdays and Sundays) and on public holidays, on a rota basis.
- Within Portal Branch locations, shift work will be required including regular weekend working and night duty.

- Undertake relevant training and personal development activities as identified in Personal Development Plan.
- Driving a departmental vehicle - (for instructor / assistant farm manager posts based in CAFRE the successful candidate(s) may be required to drive a Department minibus).
- All Agricultural Inspectorate Group 2 staff are encouraged by senior management to avail of opportunities for continuing professional development and to become a registered member of a professional body.

**The above list is not exhaustive but provides an indication of the main duties of the posts. The emphasis on particular duties will vary over time according to business needs. Group Staff may be allocated to other duties, commensurate with their grade at any locations and in other business areas.**

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

There are currently a number of full-time Inspector Group 2 – Agriculture vacancies in DAERA.

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

### **Salary**

Inspector Group 2 salary range is: £28,706 – £29,307 (under review), within which pay progression will be performance related.

Your starting salary will be at the minimum of the scale.

Pay on promotion / re-grading arrangements will apply to existing civil servants appointed through this competition.

### **Hours of Work**

The normal working hours are 37 hours net.

Some posts will require shift work e.g. those allocated a post in Portal Operations. Shift work will incur regular weekend working and night duty.

Some posts will also require work outside normal working hours including, early mornings, evenings, weekends (Saturdays and Sundays) and on public holidays, on a rota basis.

In addition, the successful candidates may be required to participate in weekly on-call rotas during weekdays, weekends, and evenings.

All of these work patterns will attract the appropriate arrangements as per the NICS Handbook.

### **Travel**

Access to a form of transport will be required in order to fulfil the responsibilities of this post.

The successful candidate may be required to drive a departmental vehicle as part of their duties and must therefore have a full current driving licence.

Travel throughout Northern Ireland may also be required and on occasion travel nationally and internationally.

## **Medical**

For some posts, successful candidates will be required to undergo Tuberculosis and Brucellosis medical assessments to ensure their suitability to undertake the full range of duties of the post. For posts where these medicals are required, offers of appointment may be made on a conditional basis pending Occupational Health Service results.

## **Driving Departmental Vehicles**

For posts based at CAFRE, the successful applicants will be required to complete Driver CPC training on appointment to gain the appropriate driving licence category required to drive a Department minibus as part of their duties for transportation of students around the College estate or on industry visits / study tours. Appropriate training will be provided by CAFRE. As part of this training, successful applicants will be required to pass a Driver's Medical assessment.

## **Vetting**

For posts based in CAFRE, the successful candidates will be required to satisfy a pre-employment check undertaken by AccessNI in accordance with Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012).

## **Probation**

Confirmation of appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of a probationary period of 1 year.

If performance, conduct or attendance during this period is not satisfactory, the appointment may be terminated. All appointees will be expected to demonstrate a track record of effective service within this period.

## **Location**

The successful candidates will be based at any one of a variety of locations throughout Northern Ireland (NI).

Agriculture Inspectors will be based in DAERA Premises (Co-located with DAERA Direct Offices) or at Portal Operations Branch locations, which currently include Larne Port, Belfast Port, Warrenpoint Port and the airports. There may also be occasions when staff are required to work in cold stores or other meat premises.

The Agriculture Instructor posts will be mainly based at CAFRE, Greenmount Campus and potentially Enniskillen Campus. The Assistant Farm Manager posts may be based across CAFRE, including Greenmount Campus, Greenmount Hill Farm at Glenwherry and Enniskillen Campus.

The decision on where any successful candidate will be posted will be based on business need.

### **Holidays**

In addition to public and privilege holidays, currently 12 days, the annual leave allowance will be 25 days, rising to 30 days after 5 years' service.

### **Pensions**

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pension package. You'll find further details on the Principal Civil Service Pensions Scheme (Northern Ireland) website at [www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni](http://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni)

### **Career Development**

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

Successful applicants will be expected to undertake essential training as identified by the Department and proactively seek out and undertake activities associated with their continuous professional development, including availing of membership of approved professional bodies.

For posts based at CAFRE, successful applicants will be required to attend training in the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 and in Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults and fully implement the requirements of both in their work.

### **Conflict of Interest**

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

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

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

## **Further Information**

Applicants wishing to learn more about the posts before deciding to apply may contact: Stephen McCrossan (Area Based Schemes Division) on 028 82253499 or email [Stephen.McCrossan@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Stephen.McCrossan@daera-ni.gov.uk)

If you have any questions about the competition process, or require any documentation in an alternative format, you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email: [recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net)

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To apply for this role applicants must have, by the closing date for applications:

1. 2 GCSE/GCE “O” levels at Grade C or above in English and Mathematics or equivalent\*

AND

2. (i) At least a Level 3 Diploma in Work-based Agriculture

OR

- (ii) A Level 3 Extended Diploma in Agriculture

OR

- (iii) A Level 3 Advanced Technical Extended Diploma in Agriculture

OR

- (iv) Equivalent\*\*

AND

3. At least one years’ relevant post qualification work experience in the agriculture industry.

AND

4. A full, current driving licence enabling the licence holder to drive in Northern Ireland and access to a form of transport which will permit them to meet the requirements of the post in full.

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.

\* Examples of equivalent qualifications to English and Mathematics GCSE/GCE are “O” levels at Grade C or above or Essential Skills Level 2.

\*\* Examples of equivalent qualifications are:

- A National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at Level 3 in Livestock or Crop Production or Poultry



- A National Diploma in Agriculture
- A College Diploma in Agriculture
- Advanced Diploma in Agriculture
- A relevant NVQ Level 3 qualification

### **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 Panel will carry out an objective evaluation of the information provided by candidates in response to eligibility criterion 3. This will be completed on a scored basis and only the highest scoring applicants will proceed to interview. The Panel will complete this assessment against the information provided by applicants in the application form only.

#### **Guaranteed Interview Scheme**

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

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

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

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

**Please note:**

- You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.
- It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.
- The selection panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.
- If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be explored at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your unique role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.
- State clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. State "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post. Please do not include your name in the employment history or eligibility criteria sections.
- No additional information or evidence provided in support of your experience will be considered at any time after the closing date for applications.
- The NICS Competency framework can be accessed via [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk)

## **ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

The interview will be competency-based. You will be asked to give examples of when you have demonstrated the competencies being assessed.

The interview will assess the following 5 competencies:

### **1. Making Effective Decisions**

Effectiveness in this area is about being objective, using sound judgement, evidence and knowledge to provide accurate, expert and professional advice. For all staff, it means showing clarity of thought, setting priorities, analysing and using evidence to evaluate options before arriving at well-reasoned, justifiable decisions.

**Marks available: 20**

### **2. Collaborating and Partnering**

People skilled in this area create and maintain positive, professional and trusting working relationships with a wide range of people within and outside the NICS, to help to achieve business objectives and goals. At all levels, it requires working collaboratively, sharing information and building supportive, responsive relationships with colleagues and stakeholders, whilst having the confidence to challenge assumptions.

**Marks available: 20**

### **3. Leading and Communicating**

At all levels, effectiveness in this area is about leading from the front and communicating with clarity, conviction and enthusiasm. It is about supporting principles of fairness of opportunity for all and a dedication to a diverse range of citizens. At senior levels, it is about establishing a strong direction and a persuasive 4 future vision, managing and engaging with people with honesty and integrity, and upholding the reputation of the Department and the NICS.

**Marks available: 20**

### **4. Managing a Quality Service**

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

**Marks available: 20**

## **5. Delivering at Pace**

Effectiveness in this area means focusing on delivering timely performance with energy and taking responsibility and accountability for quality outcomes. For all staff, it is about working to agreed goals and activities and dealing with challenges in a responsive and constructive way.

**Marks available: 20**

**Total Marks Available: 100**

**Overall Pass Mark: 60**

### **COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS**

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

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

### **INTERVIEWS**

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place at DAERA or CAFRE premises (TBC) during week commencing Monday 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023.

### **NICS COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK**

The selection process will assess candidates against the NICS competency framework at level 2.

The NICS competency framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the Civil Service values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality at the heart of everything they do, and it aligns to the three high-level leadership behaviours that every civil servant needs to model as appropriate to their role and level of responsibility: Set Direction; Engage People and Deliver Results.

Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. The framework outlines ten competencies, which are grouped into three clusters. The competencies are intended to be discrete and cumulative, with each level building on the levels below i.e. a person demonstrating a competency at level 3 should be demonstrating levels 1 and 2 as a matter of course.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service competency framework can be accessed via [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk)

**It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the competency framework as this forms the basis of selection process. Should you require assistance in accessing the competency framework please contact HRConnect.**

## GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

### APPLICATION FORM

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

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

#### **Please note:**

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

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

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

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

## **GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**

### **INTERVIEW PREPARATION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **The Merit Principle**

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

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

### **NICSHR Privacy Notice**

NICSHR are committed to protecting your privacy. HRConnect manage job applications on behalf of NICSHR, in line with the NICSHR privacy notice available via [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk)

### **Offers of Employment**

Candidates will only receive one offer of appointment which, if not accepted, will generally result in withdrawal from the competition.

### **Changes in personal circumstances and contact details**

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

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

### **Transgender Requirements**

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

### **Merit List**

**HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed.** It is presently intended that the merit list for this competition should remain extant for a period of one year. However you should be aware that circumstances may arise in the future where it will be necessary to extend the currency of the merit list for a further period. The merit list will only be extended where cogent practical reasons for doing so arise.

## **Disability Requirements**

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

## **Documentation**

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

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

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

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

Applicants must be either:

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

**ALL** candidates are required to state their nationality in the Right to Work and Nationality Requirements response box in Part 1 of your application form.



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

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

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

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

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

‘Family member of the relevant EEA or Turkish nationals’ means:

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

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

(Public Service/reserved posts insert)

- (i) A UK national; or
- (ii) an Irish or non-UK Commonwealth citizen who was in post in the NICS on 31 May 1996, or was appointed from a competition with a closing date on or before 31 May 1996, and who has remained in the NICS since that time.

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

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

## **Security**

### **1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard**

For this post in the NICS the level of vetting is a Baseline Standard. For this check you will be required to provide the following:

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

Further information regarding the Baseline Personnel Security Standard, including other acceptable documents is available via [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

We will organise a Criminal Record Check on all applicants to be carried out by AccessNI. The category of AccessNI check required for this post is;

### **Basic Disclosure Certificate**

You should not put off applying for a post because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner, and information relating to convictions is destroyed after a decision is made. Further information regarding policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and the vetting process is available at [www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk) in Recruitment Policy and Procedures manual.

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

### **Enhanced Disclosure Certificate - For posts based at CAFRE locations**

#### **Barred List Checks**

The Disclosure and Barring Service keeps two barred lists:

- people who are unsuitable for working with children
- people who are unsuitable for working with vulnerable adults

People on these lists are barred from regulated activity with children and vulnerable adults. It is a criminal offence for anyone who is included on a barred list to work or seek work, in regulated activity. Candidates should be aware that

by submitting an application form for this post, they are confirming there is no reason why they cannot work in regulated activity.

The AccessNI code of practice can be accessed via [www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni).

Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by HRConnect, normally after interview/test, and will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form. Please note that a request to complete this form should not be seen as a guarantee of an offer of appointment.

Failure to complete the application form and return it within the specified time will be regarded as 'no longer interested in the position' and your application will be withdrawn.

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

### **Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form**

**Please note the Equal Opportunities monitoring section of the application form is mandatory in order to submit an application.**

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to the DoF website [www.finance-ni.gov.uk](http://www.finance-ni.gov.uk).

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

**The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.**  
All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit

### **Feedback**

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

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

