

FOI DOF/2025-0649

**Request**

I wish to request information regarding Vacancy IRC 286576 Alternative Working Pattern Staff Officers at Great Northern Tower Belfast, DWP Belfast Service Centre, DWP Ballymena Service Centre and Lisahally Service Centre.

1. What figure does the department hold for the number of existing civil servants who were successful in this recruitment??
2. How many none civil servants were successful??
3. 4 existing civil servants moved from EO2 to SO, and there was only one interview panel, so these four staff were interviewed by someone they knew and worked closely with, why was this not seen as a conflict of interest, as an external recruitment?
4. Who and what grade in the recruitment department approved this panel to interview??
5. Why did this external recruitment vacancy not have an aptitude test??
6. Who and what grade and their position made the Decision not to have an aptitude test for this vacancy??
7. Why when it comes to DFC/DWP vacancies above AO is there no aptitude tests involved??
8. There is to be a new internal DP recruitment campaign for operational staff in the new year, which will cover DFC/DWP, again with no aptitude test, what is the name of the manager/director and their grade that has approved this recruitment campaign?
9. Who is director of recruitment at this time?

**DoF Response**

I can confirm the Department holds some of the information requested.

1. The number of existing civil servants successful in this recruitment was 27.
2. There were 3 non-civil servants who were successful.
3. In line with policy, panel members are required to declare any conflicts of interest before interviews are conducted. Whilst it is recommended that panel members, in particular the Chairperson, should not interview

candidates from their own branches, there may be instances where this is unavoidable i.e. single panel boards.

4. DoF NICSHR does not approve panels to interview. Panel members are nominated by respective departments, the role of NICS HR is to check gender and community background balance, grade and training of panel members.

5-7. Information you have requested is held by the Department but is exempt under section 21(1) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 21 exempts information if this information is reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. Section 21 is an absolute exemption, and the Department is not required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information. The information can be found at the following link: [FOI DOF/2025-0117 Competition IRC286576 - Alternative Work pattern SO](#).

8. This information is not held by NICS HR.

9. Karen Wallace is the current Director of Recruitment.