

**Candidate
Information
Booklet**

**IRC293394
Deputy Principal Statistician
Northern Ireland Statistics and
Research Agency (NISRA)
Northern Ireland Civil Service
(NICS)**

**Completed Application Forms
must be submitted to
HRConnect no later than 12
noon (UK time) on
*Friday 13th October 2023***

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

**The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an
Equal Opportunities Employer.**

Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible. You therefore should provide an email address that you have 24/7 access to and check your email account, including junk mail folder, to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. If you change your email address, then it is your responsibility to inform HRConnect. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

Contents

	Page
Foreword	3
Background	4
Key Responsibilities	6
Terms and Conditions	8
Eligibility Criteria	11
Selection Process	14
Guidance for Applicants	23

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.

All civil servants are appointed on merit and on the basis of fair and open competition. They are expected to carry out their role with dedication and a commitment to the NI Civil Service's core values: integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

The NICS is seeking to fill Deputy Principal (DP) Statistician roles that require specific skills and experience. Applications are invited from candidates who meet the eligibility criteria, to apply for this opportunity and challenge.

This booklet provides further information on the key responsibilities of the DP Statistician role in the NICS and sets out the skills and competencies required. We have also included important information on the selection process.

There are currently a number of vacancies in the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), Department of Finance (DoF). The current posts on offer will be based in Greater Belfast including the Bangor area.

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.

If you have any further questions, please refer to the 'How Do I Apply?' section of the NICS recruitment website or contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330.

BACKGROUND

About the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)

NISRA provides statistics, research and registration services and is responsible for taking the Census of Population.

NISRA's core purpose is:

- to provide a high-quality, cost-effective registration, statistical and research service that informs policy and democratic processes; and
- to provide a window on Northern Ireland's society and its economy by providing evidence to inform decision-making.

Around 520 staff work in NISRA along with approximately 300 field staff. Approximately three quarters of the 520 staff are statisticians and social researchers (all of whom are graded as Statisticians). In addition to actual statistics, statisticians are drawn from a range of academic disciplines including maths, psychology, geography, computing, data science and engineering, all subjects with statistics included as part of their syllabus.

NISRA staff work primarily in Government Departments but are also located in other Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies.

Although career management of staff in NISRA is centered in the DoF, staff can expect to work in a number of different Departments throughout their career. The jobs on offer will normally be based in Greater Belfast including the Bangor area, although there may be a small number of vacancies that are based in other parts of Northern Ireland.

Deputy Principal Statisticians will have the opportunity to participate in training and development activities starting with a programme of induction and continuing throughout their careers, in accordance with business needs. This will enable the successful candidate to enhance their existing skills and develop new ones.

More information about NISRA can be obtained on the Agency's website at www.nisra.gov.uk and on Facebook and Twitter at;

<https://www.facebook.com/nisra.gov.uk/>

<https://twitter.com/nisra>

A note from the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency

NISRA is an organisation of nearly 400 specialists including statisticians, analysts, social researchers, economists and ICT technicians and 120 administrative staff. We work across all Government Departments and many other public bodies. We record births, deaths and marriages and carry out all of the major household and business surveys in Northern Ireland including the Census of Population. Whether the issue be one of health, education, transport or the labour market, we have teams conducting statistical analysis and social research in those areas.

Government at every level needs to justify public expenditure and NISRA provides much of the evidence necessary for the formulation, development, and evaluation of effective public policy. Our information base is vast, and our activities span data collection, analysis, interpretation and commentary. Despite the inherent challenges of producing and qualifying such information, it is our job to ensure the supply of high quality, timely information to the public as well key decision makers.

We are looking for people who can lead in the field of government data collection, analysis and interpretation; are committed to enabling our economic advancement; who want to help inform public policy making and help shape the public debate.

If you are such a person who can demonstrate that a career in official statistics or research is your passion, we would very much like to hear from you.

Dr Philip Wales
Chief Executive

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The information below provides an overview of the type of work that a DP Statistician could be expected to undertake. The list is not exhaustive.

Acquiring data/Understanding customer needs

- Locating data in a range of published and unpublished sources.
- Identifying and assessing suitability of data sources, selecting the right data for purpose, and managing its acquisition.
- Developing, designing, managing and advising on surveys and other data collection techniques while ensuring compliance with legal and ethical requirements.
- Promoting efficiencies in data gathering, validation and storage.
- Liaising with policy colleagues, including senior officials, in developing evidence-based policy, implementation and evaluation.
- Liaising with external research communities and providing briefing on external research and its implications for government policy.

Data analysis, interpretation and Research

- Applying statistical techniques knowledgeably, distinguishing the limits of statistical findings.
- Using relevant software and keeping up-to-date with IT developments.
- Quality assuring outputs and processes to high standards.
- Drawing sound inferences from data and providing valid explanations to policy colleagues and other interested parties.
- Keeping in touch with current policies and their impact on information needs in order to be relevant to the decision making process.
- Identifying the wider implications of statistics produced and any related risks and conveying this information to customers.
- Undertaking and / or directing qualitative research to include focus groups, one-to-one interviews, literature reviews.

Presenting and disseminating data effectively

- Communicating effectively with all levels of audience, choosing the most effective means of delivery to clearly explain statistical concepts and findings.
- Developing and implementing dissemination strategies via appropriate media.
- Understanding disclosure and confidentiality issues, taking account of practical implications for data used and thus safeguarding the security of the information held.
- Promoting appropriate data sharing.
- Infographics

Working with credibility and integrity

- Implementing the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, ensuring compliance.
- Participating in National Statistics reviews and assessments.
- Keeping abreast of statistical/research developments within government departments and the wider profession.
- Promoting the use of statistics and research findings and NISRA's role to policy colleagues.
- Keeping knowledge up-to-date and expanding range of knowledge through training and other career development initiatives.

Team leadership and staff development

- Delivering services through the leadership of others.
- Promoting and role modelling Agency values.
- Aligning business area/team activities with Branch plans and Agency policy and priorities.
- Managing and implementing change and enabling and supporting others to do the same.
- Encouraging and actively participating in collaborative team working within own team and across the Agency.
- Identifying and addressing personal, team or individual development needs.
- Implementing NICS Performance Management procedures effectively.

Resource and project management

- Managing resources effectively which may include staff, finances and or equipment.
- Identifying how Agency strategies and activities contributes to departmental policies and priorities.
- Contributing to the development of Agency policies, Branch plans and value for money service provision.
- Applying appropriate project management controls and financial procedures to ensure good governance is achieved.
- Monitoring the use of resources in line with organisational procedures and plans against targets and acting to maintain performance.

This list is not exhaustive but gives a good indication of the type of duties the post holder will be expected to carry out, though these will vary from post to post

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

There are a number of posts available.

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

Location

Successful applicants will normally be based in Greater Belfast including the Bangor area. There may be a small number of vacancies that are based in other parts of Northern Ireland.

As DP is a mobile grade successful candidates must be prepared to work in any location in Northern Ireland.

Salary

Salary will be in the range £40,300 - £43,191 (under review) within which pay progression will be performance related. Starting salary will be at the minimum of the scale. If a successful candidate is an existing NICS civil servant normal pay on promotion/re-grading terms will apply.

Pensions

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

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.

Hours of Work

The normal conditioned hours of work are full-time: 37 hours per week Monday to Friday. Most offices work flexi-time.

The NICS recognises the value of work/life balance for its staff. Requests for alternative working patterns will be considered, with decisions based on business needs.

It is envisaged that some element of home working and / or remote working may be possible in line with the NICS Hybrid Working policy and business need.

Travel

The successful candidates may be required to travel throughout Northern Ireland and, on occasion, within Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

Vetting

An appointment will be dependent on the individual satisfying the vetting requirements for the post. The level of vetting required for this post is Basic Check level. Some vacancies will require candidates to be cleared to Counter Terrorist Check (CTC), Security Check (SC) or Developed Vetting (DV) levels.

Probation

Confirmation of appointment will be dependent upon the satisfactory completion of a probationary period of 1 year. If performance, conduct or attendance during this period is not satisfactory the appointment may be terminated. All appointees will be expected to demonstrate a track record of effective service within this period.

Training

In addition, successful candidates will be required to undertake ongoing training to ensure that their knowledge and skill set is up to date.

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.

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 the successful candidate to complete a Conflict of Interest declaration on appointment.

Further Information

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply should contact Jacquie Hyvart by email at Jacquie.Hyvart@nisra.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

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must possess by the closing date for applications:

1. At least a second-class honours degree [2.2] that includes at least one module in statistics, data analysis or social science research methods*;

OR

2. At least a second-class honours degree [2.2] and a Royal Statistical Society award of at least Certificate level**;

OR

3. A postgraduate degree that includes at least one module in statistics, data analysis or social science research methods ***.

*Applicants applying under criteria 1 **must** provide in their application form details of **all** their modules taken in their degree(s). These modules may be used to determine the extent of the candidate's statistics, data analysis or social science research methods.

Applicants applying under criteria 2 **must provide in their application form details of their degree and of their Royal Statistical Society Award of at least Certificate level.

***Applicants applying under criteria 3 **must** provide in their application form details of their primary degree and **all** their modules taken in their postgraduate degree. These modules may be used to determine the extent of the candidate's statistics, data analysis or social science research methods.

AND

4. A minimum of 3 years' experience of working in a role where a substantial* component of your duties required you to routinely undertake statistical analysis, conduct / design surveys and / or apply other recognised quantitative /qualitative research methods**.

AND

5. Be able to provide evidence of experience of providing effective leadership and resource management to successfully deliver business objectives.

AND

6. Be able to provide evidence of experience of building constructive, positive and collaborative partnerships with a range of stakeholders, to effectively deliver organisational objectives.

* 'Substantial' is defined as at least 80% of the time spent working and does not include research work undertaken as part of a postgraduate degree.

** Whilst not exhaustive, this would include the production of statistical outputs, operational research, data science and social science research and financial or economic analysis.

The Panel will not make assumptions from the title of your qualification. If this information is not included in your application form the panel may not be able to determine that you meet the eligibility requirements and your application may be rejected.

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/will be 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 how it is equivalent, so that a well-informed decision can be made.

You will be required to provide documentary evidence of your qualifications prior to placement so please ensure you have these readily available.

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 a guaranteed number of 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](#)

In assessing whether applicants meet the minimum essential eligibility criteria, they are required to undertake a test/assessment. All applicants must achieve the required minimum score in order to be invited to interview.

Should a large number of candidates achieve the required score, we may limit the overall numbers of interviews offered and those applicants who demonstrate they best meet the minimum essential eligibility criteria for the job (i.e. the highest scoring) will be invited to interview. In this scenario, we will take positive action to ensure that the number of GIS applicants invited to interview will be in proportion to those who pass the test/assessment.

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**

SELECTION PROCESS

There are 3 stages to the selection process, which are:

1. Testing:
 - a. online numeracy test;
 - b. online statistics and research concepts test;
 - c. online situational judgement test;
2. Eligibility Sift; and
3. Competence Based Interview.

Only those applicants who meet the required pass mark in each of the 3 tests, and then the eligibility criteria, may progress to interview. The panel reserve the right to interview only the top scoring candidates from the test.

Test scores will not count towards final selection, this will be based solely on performance at interview.

TESTING

Following successful validation of applications candidate's will be invited to undertake an aptitude test that is designed to assess some of the skills that are required for the post of **Deputy Principal Statistician**.

You should receive an invitation email (sent to the email address you provided) with a link to the online assessment by **5pm 27th October 2023**. You will have until **5pm 3rd November 2023** to complete the test.

You need to complete the following steps to complete the assessment. You should access the assessment site as soon as possible on receiving your invitation email.

NOTE... all of the following steps are done via the assessment site which you access using the link in your invitation email.

- 1. Check your webcam**
- 2. Verify your identity**
- 3. Study the Familiarisation material**
- 4. Take the online tests**

The online assessment can be completed in your own time and at a place that suits you.

If you do not receive an email by **5pm 27th October 2023** please **e-mail** recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net

Disability Requirements: Reasonable Adjustment Requests

We wish to ensure that all applicants have the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability. If you require any form of reasonable adjustment to complete any of the assessments outlined, please note this in the box provided on your application form. You should include details of your disability and the specific adjustment you need. Candidates will be required to provide relevant evidence to support their request for a reasonable adjustment – for example, an Occupational Psychologist report, GP's medical statement, etc.

It is essential that you do this in advance of starting the live online tests.

Evidence to support your request for adjustments should be sent to HRConnect at recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net as soon as possible following submission of your application.

Please mark your correspondence with the competition reference number IRC293394 – DP STAT and title it 'Supporting evidence for reasonable adjustment request'. We may contact you directly to discuss your requirements.

It is essential that special arrangements concerning any adjustment requests are made in advance of starting the live test as retrospective arrangements cannot be made after you have started the live test. Further information can be found on the NICS Recruitment website – [Information for Disabled Applicants](#).

Preparing for your online assessment

You will need a computer, a working webcam and a reliable internet connection.

You will need to use an up-to-date Chrome or Microsoft Edge browser on your PC. If you are using a Mac, you MUST use Chrome.

Do not use a tablet, phone or Chromebook. Safari is not supported.

Once you have accessed the assessment website **you MUST do the following before you can take the live tests** – and you need to do these things well in advance of taking the live tests.

We recommend that you access the site and start the process straight away. All of these steps and the live assessments are completed on the same assessment website.

NOTE – the final deadline for completing of the live tests is **5pm 3rd November 2023**.

APTITUDE TEST PROCESS

STEP 1: Check your webcam

STEP 2: Verify your identity

STEP 3: Study the Familiarisation material

STEP 4: Take the online tests

STEP 1: Check your webcam

NOTE – you cannot start the live tests unless your ID has been verified. Links to the live tests will appear below the Familiarisation links when your ID has been successfully verified.

The onus is on candidates to ensure they have access to a webcam, regrettably no alternatives are available.

Click the 'Webcam test' button. This will check if your webcam is working within the program. Also make sure that you are clearly visible and front on in the image and be aware that you need to remain clearly visible throughout the live assessment.

Do this well in advance of taking the live assessment and also do it immediately before taking the live assessment in case something has changed.

STEP 2: Verify your ID

IMPORTANT: DO NOT SEND ANY PHOTOS OF YOURSELF OR YOUR ID BY EMAIL. YOU MUST DO THIS THROUGH THE ASSESSMENT WEBSITE.

Before starting the ID Verification process, you should click the yellow-highlighted link at the top of the main menu page ('ID Verification and Proctoring – instructions, common issues and resolutions.pdf') and read the document. If you encounter a problem with your ID verification or starting a live test, please consult it before emailing support.

NOTE – you cannot start the live tests unless your ID has been verified.

For this you will need to have a valid photo ID (Passports, driving licenses and electoral cards are acceptable photo IDs). The process is straightforward and is explained at the time.

Using the webcam, you will need to take a webcam image of yourself and a webcam image photo ID (e.g. passport). You will be informed by email of the verification outcome using the email you provided at application. You will be asked to check that this is correct when you submit your images for verification.

A human verifier will check your ID and you will receive an email from **admin@assessmentintelligencemail.com** informing you of the outcome

(but do check your junk/spam folder and do log on to check your ID verification status if you feel you are waiting too long).

You may be asked to re-take the photos and this is not uncommon, so please start the verification process early to ensure you have enough time to complete the process.

You can check your ID Verification Status by logging in. If you have not been notified within 24 hours of submitting images AND your online verification status is still showing as 'Submitted waiting approval', then you should **email: support@assessmentintelligence.com** including your **Candidate Reference Number and 'IRC293394 – DP STAT'** in the subject line.

We advise you to submit your webcam images as soon as possible. You should have submitted your images for identity verification by **5pm Tuesday 31st October 2023** otherwise we cannot guarantee that the identity verification process will be completed in time for you to take the live tests before the final deadline.

NOTE – if the name on your photo ID will differ significantly from your name on your application, **you MUST inform HR Connect by emailing Recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net including your Candidate Reference Number and 'IRC293394 – DP STAT' in the subject line.** Your email should explain the reason and include any supporting document (e.g. marriage certificate).

NOTE – you **MUST** complete the identity verification process online. Under **no circumstances send any images by email to the 'support@' address** – unless we specifically request it.

Please note, it is your responsibility to ensure that you submit your images in good time.

STEP 3: Study the Familiarisation material for the online assessments

There are Familiarisation programs for the assessments. It is **ESSENTIAL** that you use the online Familiarisation material to check that your browser and the internet connection that you intend to take the live tests on are compatible with the online tests.

Note that some network firewalls, e.g. on work networks may block access to the test site or prevent images from showing. If you can complete the Verification of ID process, your Webcam check is successful and the Familiarisation and Practice material works well on your IT equipment, this is a good indication that the live tests will work also. It is **ESSENTIAL** that you access the Familiarisation and Practice materials using the computer and internet connection that you intend to take the live test on well in advance of the tests.

The Familiarisation material will give you a detailed description of the tests, include full instructions for completing the tests and provide example questions so that you know how to record your answers and navigate your

Version 25.0

way around the tests. You should be fully familiar with these things before taking the live tests in order to perform at your best.

STEP 4: Taking the live tests

- For best results we recommend completing the online assessments in a test-like environment. Any possible distractions should be turned off, for example mobile phones, TV and music. Concentration is needed throughout the assessments, so when completing each test, ensure other people are aware that they should not disturb you until you are finished. **No responsibility can be accepted for any issues arising from where you choose to sit the tests.**
- Before starting a live test you should close all other browsers and browser tabs. You should not take the test on a computer that is remotely connected to a work network as the link may be unstable.
- Once you log into the test platform and complete the honesty and privacy statements you will see a menu showing (i) Webcam Test (ii) the Identity Verification, and (iii) the Familiarisation and Practice material. The links to the live assessments will appear on the menu once your identity has been verified.
- Immediately before you click the start button to begin a live assessment, there will be an image of you at the bottom of the page. This should be a front-on view of you as you take the assessment. You need to make sure that you are clearly seen in this image before starting the assessment and that you will remain visible in the image during the assessment. Another photo of you will be taken by the webcam for a last automated check before starting each assessment.
- During the assessment, you will see a small video stream from your webcam in the top left corner. Images from this stream will be monitored.

We take great care with your webcam images and retain them for as short a time as possible. The image of your photo ID is deleted as soon as your identity has been verified.

Technical issues

If you lose internet connection while in the live test, you should immediately close your browser.

You will be able to continue the test without losing time and your previous answers will have been saved (except possibly on the last page you were on before losing connection).

If you experience any other issue while taking the live test, you should immediately close your browser and email:

support@assessmentintelligence.com including your Candidate Reference Number and 'IRC293394 DP STAT' in the subject line.

If you do need to close your browser or your computer crashes and restarts, you must start up a fresh browser and paste in the test link again.

If your browser starts up and reloads the test again automatically, you must close it down immediately and start from a fresh browser.

If your browser starts up and asks if you want to restore sessions or pages, you MUST decline.

Final deadline

IMPORTANT – you must complete all of the live tests by 5pm 3rd November 2023 and we strongly advise that you complete them well in advance of the deadline. If you leave it towards the end of the assessment window and find you have a problem (e.g., with your computer or internet) you may not have time to resolve your problem and complete the tests before the deadline.

You must have submitted your images for ID Verification before **5pm Tuesday 31st October 2023 and** preferably well before then.

Eligibility Sift

An assessment of the evidence provided against the relevant eligibility criteria will take place for those candidates who successfully pass the testing stage of the process. The panel reserve the right to sift only the top scoring candidates from the test.

INTERVIEW CRITERIA

Candidates who are successful in reaching the interview stage of the competition will be expected to demonstrate how they meet the following competences at interview:

1. Making Effective Decisions

This area is about being objective, using sound judgement, evidence and knowledge to provide accurate, expert and professional advice. 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. 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. It is also about leaders

providing the focus and energy to drive activities forward through others and encourage staff to perform effectively during challenging and changing times.

Marks available: 20

3. Changing and Improving

People who are effective in this area are responsive, innovative and seek out opportunities to create effective change. It is about being open to change, suggesting ideas for improvements to the way things are done, and working in 'smarter', more focused ways.

Marks available: 20

4. 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.

Marks available: 20

5. Collaborating and Partnering

People skilled in this area create and maintain positive, professional and trusting working relationships with a wide range of people inside 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

6. 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

Total marks available - 120

Pass Mark – 72

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 in Belfast during week commencing 27th November 2023.

NICS COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The selection process will assess candidates against the NICS competency framework at level 3.

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

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 at recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net.

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

APPLICATION FORM

You can apply online at 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, 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.

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

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 interview.

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.

Security

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:

- 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.

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 in Recruitment Policy and Procedures manual.

Security Policy for AccessNI Disclosure Information is available at www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk under Useful Information.

The AccessNI code of practice can be accessed via 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.

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.
4. Developed Vetting (DV): as point 3 plus subject interview and field investigation.

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.

Applications from young people (people under the age of 35), people with a disability and people from minority ethnic 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**