

Principal Physiotherapist

Occupational Health & Wellbeing Service

Department of Finance

Completed Expression of Interest forms must be submitted no later than **12 noon (UK time) on Friday 18 September 2026**.

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

Candidate Information Booklet



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COMMUNICATION BETWEEN NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE AND YOU

We will issue as many competition communications as possible by email. Please provide a valid email address for this purpose. Please check your email account and junk folder to make sure you don't miss any important messages from us.

Completed Expression of Interest forms must be submitted no later than 12 noon (UK time) on Friday 18 September 2026.

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WELCOME

We are delighted you are interested in this Principal Physiotherapist competition.

This is a fantastic opportunity to join the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS).

The NICS is seeking to fill a Principal Physiotherapist role that requires 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 Principal Physiotherapist role in the NICS and sets out the skills and competencies required.

There is currently one permanent, full-time vacancy based at NICSHR, 2-4 Bruce Street, Belfast. However, we are open to discussions about alternative work patterns that support a healthy work-life balance and applications will be considered from candidates wishing to work reduced hours. Approvals will be based on business need.

This competition may also be used to fill further vacancies which may arise during the lifetime of this recruitment exercise.

All NI Civil Servants are appointed on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

Please read carefully through the information contained within this Candidate Information Booklet and retain it for reference throughout the selection process.

We wish to ensure all applicants have the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability. We will consider all requests for reasonable adjustments in accordance with our obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 to complete any of the assessments.

If you have any questions, or require any documentation in an alternative format e.g. braille, easy read, large print, audio etc. you should contact nic recruitment@talentdog.com

We wish you every success in your application.

BACKGROUND

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 staffed by civil servants.

You can find more information on the government arrangements here, including the [functions of the Departments](#) on the Northern Ireland Executive website. *(Clicking on this link will open a new window/tab)*

All NI civil servants are expected to carry out their role with dedication and a commitment to the NI Civil Service's core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.



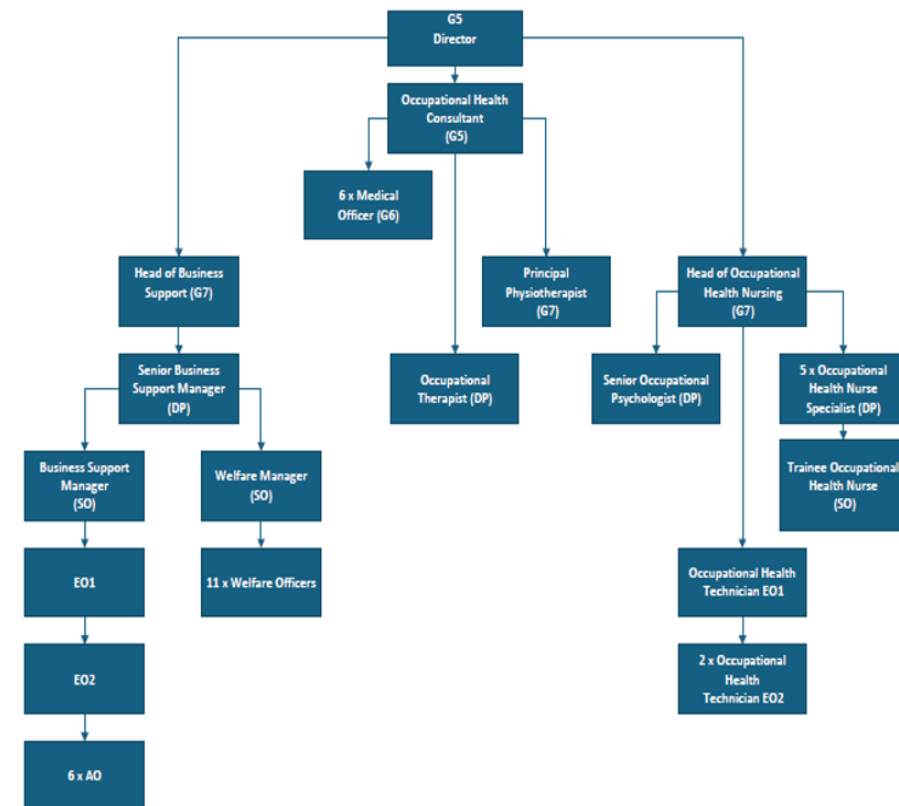
BACKGROUND

OHW provides a comprehensive occupational health service to the NICS departments and their agencies, and to a number of non-departmental public and arm's length bodies.

It is a multi-disciplinary organisation led by the Grade 5 Director of People Services; supported by Occupational Health Consultant, Head of Occupational Nursing and Head of Business Support.

The Principal Physiotherapist will work as part of a multi-disciplinary team within OHW which includes medical officers, occupational health nurse specialists, an occupational therapist, an occupational psychologist, occupational health technicians and business support staff, to provide a range of occupational health services to clients. The Principal Physiotherapist will report to the Occupational Health Consultant and will also have the support of the OHW multidisciplinary team.

The purpose of the post is to ensure that OHW is responsive to the existing and emerging healthcare needs of the NICS and client bodies. This will include professional advice on a wide range of workplace health related issues, health promotion, health protection programmes and input to policy and procedure development.



KEY BENEFITS

- A rewarding career delivering impact with one of Northern Ireland's largest employers.
- A salary of £61,673 - £64,469 per annum (under review).
- An attractive pension package providing a range of valuable benefits and current employer contributions of 34.25%. For further details visit [Civil Service Pensions \(NI\) | Department of Finance](#)
- 25 days annual leave, rising to 30 days after 5 years' service, and 12 public and privilege holidays each year.
- Opportunity for career development and progression.
- Flexible ways of working depending on the individual role.
- Job stability – we offer secure employment.
- For further information on the pay and benefits offer go to our website at: [Working in the Northern Ireland Civil Service | Department of Finance](#)



Key Responsibilities

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The main duties of the post will include:

- Act as the clinical lead for a physiotherapy team within OHW and lead future development and expansion of service and provide clear operational leadership and management of all staff within command.
- Lead in strategic and operational planning of the physiotherapy team.
- Be responsible for maintaining provision of a high quality, specialised service and work with relevant HR colleagues, Departments and clinicians to develop this in line with organisational requirements.
- Lead clinical audit and undertake research to optimise the provision of physiotherapy services for employees and stakeholders in order to support improvement of the musculoskeletal health and wellbeing of staff.
- Oversee the governance of an external network of physiotherapists.
- Manage an active caseload, carrying out physical assessment and treatment of patients, complete individual ergonomic assessments, fitness for work assessments and provision of expert advice to facilitate return to work. The role will encompass the use of highly specialised clinical assessments and diagnostic skills and the use of clinically advanced physiotherapy interventions.
- Work closely with other members of the multi-disciplinary team, providing information and advice internally and to customers/clients.

This list is not exhaustive, and the successful candidate will be required to carry out other duties as allocated by management.

Further Information

Applicants wishing to learn more about the role before deciding to apply may telephone Amber Simpson on 02890 251821 or email Amber.Simpson@finance-ni.gov.uk

Diversity & Inclusion

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

The NICS values and welcomes diversity and is committed to creating a truly inclusive workplace. Diversity and Inclusion is reflected in and embedded across the entire range of NICS employment policies and practices, such as: Transitioning at Work Policy, Dignity at Work Policy, Maternity Leave, Paternity Leave, Special Leave, Adoption Leave, Reasonable Adjustment Guidance and Alternative Working Policy.

The following groups are under-represented at this grade in the Northern Ireland Civil Service. We therefore particularly welcome applications from:

- People under the age of 35;
- People with a disability; and
- People from minority ethnic communities.

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



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

The Civil Service People Strategy 2025-2030 sets out our ambition for a collaborative and skilled civil service focused on outcomes and delivering for all with clear direction and focus across three key themes:

- (i) **Skills and Capacity:** Equipping our workforce to meet current and future demands;
- (ii) **Experience and Environment:** Creating a supportive work environment; and
- (iii) **Leadership and Inclusion:** Fostering strong leadership, inclusivity, and diversity.

As a large employer and with a responsibility for delivering services to citizens, equality, diversity and inclusion are important to us. The strategy contains a commitment to foster a culture of strong leadership, inclusivity, and diversity to drive better outcomes for our workforce and the public we serve.

To achieve our vision for an inclusive workplace culture where everyone can be free to be themselves and where everyone has the same opportunity to reach their full potential, we have an active Diversity Champions Network who work closely with our staff networks to deliver actions to promote diversity and inclusion.

Disability Requirements and Reasonable Adjustment Requests

We will consider all requests for reasonable adjustments during this recruitment process.

Please contact nicerecruitment@talentdog.com

Selection Process

SELECTION PROCESS

THE SELECTION PROCESS IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. Complete an Online Formal Application Form;
2. Invitation to Interview; and
3. Merit List.

1. ONLINE FORMAL APPLICATION FORM

If you are interested in applying, make sure you meet the eligibility requirements.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date:

1. Diploma/Degree in Physiotherapy Studies

AND

2. Evidence of successful completion of a minimum of two MSc Level accredited post-graduate modules, or equivalent, specific to the field of MSK and/or Occupational Health.

AND

3. Seven years' postgraduate experience to include a minimum of five years' experience at specialist grade or above within the area of musculoskeletal outpatients, to include experience in the management of musculoskeletal disorders in the workplace.

AND

4. Registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as a Physiotherapist.

AND

5. Portfolio of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) relevant to the management of patients with musculoskeletal disorders and/or the occupational health field that would be judged by the panel to meet the specification of this post.

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal *qualifications/professional membership* 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.

SELECTION PROCESS

Equivalent professional membership: give details of the professional membership held and reasons why you consider it to be equivalent to the membership required. The onus is on you to provide the panel with details of the professional membership so that a well-informed decision can be made.

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

We will complete a formal screening of your Application Form to ensure your application is valid and you meet the eligibility criteria. Applications deemed invalid will be withdrawn from the competition.

2. INVITATION TO INTERVIEW

Candidates who meet the eligibility criteria and have completed the Online Application Form will be invited to attend an interview in Belfast during **Monday 19th – Wednesday 21st October 2026.**

3. MERIT LIST

Candidates who meet the required standard and pass mark for the Interview Stage will be deemed suitable for appointment and will be placed on a list in order of merit, with the highest scoring candidate ranked first. NICS will allocate candidates to vacancies in the order listed.

Candidates will be taken through pre appointment formalities.

It is intended that the order of merit will remain active for a period of 1 year. However, there is a possibility, although remote, that circumstances may arise where it will be necessary to extend the list for a further period. This will only occur where practical reasons for doing so arise.

DISABILITY REQUIREMENTS AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT REQUESTS

We wish to ensure all applicants have the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability. If you require any form of reasonable adjustment, please note this in the box provided on the Online Formal Application Form. You should include details of your disability and the specific adjustment you need. We will consider all requests for reasonable adjustments for any stage of this recruitment process.

[Further information on reasonable adjustments](#)

You will need to provide relevant evidence to support your request for a reasonable adjustment – for example, an Occupational Psychologist report or a GP's medical statement.

SELECTION PROCESS

INTERVIEW

The selection process will include a competency-based interview. The core competencies we will assess are:

1. 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

2. 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 Minimum standard: 12

3. 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 to support service delivery.

Marks available: 20 Minimum standard: 12

4. 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

5. 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

6. Changing and improving

People who are effective in this area are responsive, innovative and seek out opportunities to create effective change. For all staff, 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

Total Marks Available: 120

Overall Pass Mark: 72

SELECTION PROCESS

Selection panels will design questions to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in each of the areas above and award marks accordingly. Interviews are scheduled to last approx. **30 minutes**.

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

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in **Belfast on Monday 19th – Wednesday 21st October 2026**.

As this competition is being run to a very tight schedule, candidates should make themselves available for interview during the period specified above. Requests for reconvened interview time/date will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and on the dates above.

NICS COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The selection process will assess candidates against the NICS competency framework at **level 4**.

Principal Physiotherapist is analogous to **Grade 7**.

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 the selection process.

Terms and Conditions

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

LOCATION

This post will be based in NICSHR, 2-4 Bruce Street, Belfast, BT2 7JD.

The NICS operates a Hybrid Working Policy which allows staff to work between the office and remote working locations/home, based on business needs. While OHW provides a front line service which in the main requires attendance in the medical suite an element of remote work/home working can be considered.

SALARY

Salary will be within the range **£61,673 - £64,469** (under review).

The successful candidate can expect to be placed at the minimum point of the pay scale. If the successful candidate is an existing member of the NICS, starting pay on transfer/promotion to a new substantive grade will apply.

PENSIONS

We offer all employees an attractive pension package providing a range of valuable benefits both for the member and their dependants, providing peace of mind when it comes to planning for future retirement. Provisions also include generous ill-health, death and dependants' benefits and scope to top up pension through buying added pension.

More details can be obtained from the website www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni or if you are unable to access the website please contact Civil Service Pensions at:

Waterside House, 75 Duke Street, Londonderry, BT47 6FP.

Tel: 02871 319000

Email: cspensions@finance-ni.gov.uk

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 net per week, Monday to Friday. Most offices work flexi-time. However, the NICS offers a range of flexibilities to enable a better work-life balance for employees.

TRAVEL

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

Travel throughout Northern Ireland will be required and travel nationally and internationally may also be required on a regular basis.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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 Counter terrorist Check (CTC).

PROBATION

Confirmation of appointment will be dependent upon the satisfactory completion of a probationary period of one year. If performance, conduct or attendance during this period is not satisfactory, the appointment may be terminated. Existing NICS staff who have successfully completed a probationary period will not be required to serve a further probationary period.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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 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 into 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.

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GENERAL 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.

You may be asked 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.

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.

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MERIT LIST

Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be listed in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first.

We 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.

NICS HR PRIVACY NOTICE

NICSHR are committed to protecting your privacy. The NICS HR 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.

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 nicsrecruitment@talentdog.com. Details of this will only be used for this purpose and will not form any part of the selection process.

DISABILITY REQUIREMENTS

We 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, 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 nicsrecruitment@talentdog.com where your requirements will be discussed in strictest confidence.

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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 the 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 that **ALL** applicants for external recruitment will be subject to a Nationality validation check. Applicants must be either:

- (i) UK national; or
- (ii) National of the Republic of Ireland; or
- (iii) National of a Commonwealth country; or
- (iv) Nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Iceland or Liechtenstein with settled or pre-settled status under the [European Union Settlement Scheme \(EUSS\)](#); or

(v) Nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Iceland or Liechtenstein have made a valid application for settled or pre-settled status under [European Union Settlement Scheme \(EUSS\)](#).

(vi) Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals working in the Civil Service or who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service; or

(vii) Certain family members of the relevant EU, EEA, Swiss & Turkish nationals.

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

For candidates applying under categories iii – vii you are required to provide the confirmation of Right to Work and Nationality Requirements, including your 'Share code' in the response box in Part 1 of your application form.

You should provide details of 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](#).

Failure to provide the requested information **WILL** result in your application being rejected.

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[EU Settlement Scheme EU, other EEA, Swiss citizens and family members](#) provides guidance on EUSS and certain family members.

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 in the [Nationality Guidance](#) section of the NICS Recruitment website.

SECURITY

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For the Principal Physiotherapist post in the NICS the level of vetting is a Counter Terrorist Check.

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

- Your passport; OR
- 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);
- 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 [Government baseline personnel security standard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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

Basic Disclosure Certificate

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

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

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.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MONITORING FORM

Please note that 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 Department of Finance website www.finance-ni.gov.uk.

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

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.

FEEDBACK

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is committed to ensuring 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 as well as at interview.

Feedback in respect of eligibility 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.

