



Northern Ireland

Civil Service

Student Placements

up to 51 weeks

Completed formal application forms must be submitted by no later than **12 noon (UK time) on 23rd October 2026.**

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

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET



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WELCOME

We are delighted you are considering joining the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) on a Student Placement for up to 51 weeks.

The placements provide excellent opportunities to not only gain valuable experience with the NICS but also to develop skills and gain practical experience in a professional working environment. This competition will be used to fill approximately **90** Student Placement vacancies across the NICS. Further detail on the placements available can be found in the section entitled “Types of Placement.”

All appointments to the NICS are on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. Civil Servants are expected to carry out their role with dedication and a commitment to the NICS core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

As one of the largest employers here, we have a range of opportunities to help you further your career and we are committed to being inclusive and representative of the people we serve.

This booklet provides further information on the key responsibilities of Student Placements in the NICS and sets out the skills and competencies that are required for these roles. We have also included important information on the assessment process.

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 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 to participate in any stage of the selection process.

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 nicsrecruitment@talentdog.com

The majority of our communication with you in this recruitment exercise will be by email. Please ensure you provide a valid email address and regularly check your email account and junk folder to make sure you don't miss any important messages from us.

The closing date for applications is **12 noon on Friday 23rd October 2026**. Late applications will not be accepted.

We wish you every success in your application.

ABOUT THE NICS

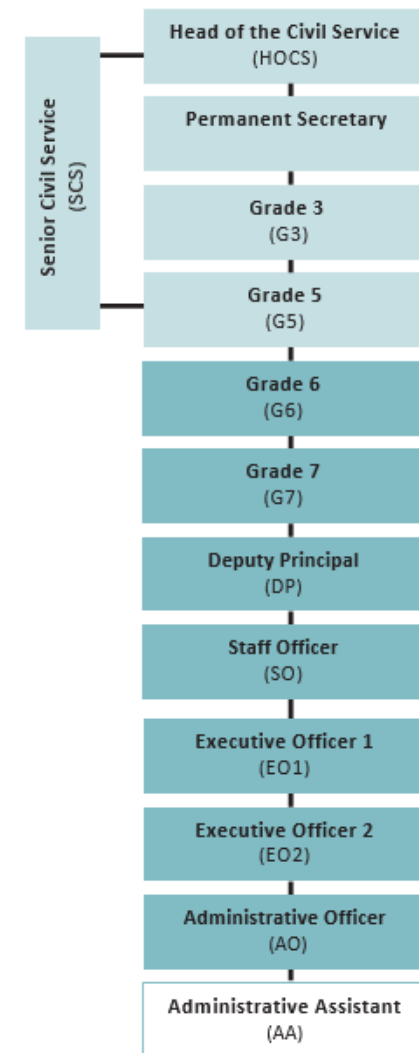
The NICS is embarking on an exciting period of renewal to ensure we deliver government policies, legislation and the public services needed to make life better for people here.

Our remit covers all aspects of public life here, including key areas such as:

- health
- public finances
- justice
- education
- the environment
- communities
- the economy; and
- infrastructure.

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

The following NICS Organisational Chart shows how the **student placement grade (equivalent to AA)** fits into the overall organisation.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

NUMBER OF POSITIONS

It is anticipated that there will be approximately 90 placements to be filled by this competition across a range of Departments:

- Department of Finance (DoF),
- Department for Infrastructure (DfI),
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)
- Department for the Economy (DfE),
- Department of Justice (DoJ).

In addition, placements will also be available within the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) which is a non-Ministerial Department staffed by Civil Servants.

This may change depending on the level of demands from Departments.

LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT

These placement student positions are temporary appointments which will last for a period of up to 51 weeks.

APPOINTMENT

Successful candidates should be prepared to take up post during the period July - September 2027.

SALARY

£25,796 (under review) per annum.

Student placement is analogous to AA grade for pay purposes.

LOCATION

The NICS has offices across Northern Ireland and by applying for this competition you are agreeing to be posted in any of these locations.

Please note: The majority of Student Placement posts will be in the Greater Belfast area. However, this competition will also be used to fill vacancies in other office locations across Northern Ireland. The NICS operates a hybrid working policy, offering a mix of working from the office and other agreed locations depending on the needs of the business.

PENSIONS

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pension package. Further details can be found on the Principal Civil Service Pensions Scheme (Northern Ireland) website at www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni (Clicking on this link will open a new window/tab)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

HOLIDAYS

In addition to public and privilege holidays, currently 12 days, the annual leave allowance is 25 days pro rata.

WORKING HOURS

The full-time working week in the NICS is 37 hours, excluding meal breaks. The majority of the NICS operates a flexi-time scheme, usually between the hours of 8am and 6pm allowing you to have an element of flexibility over your working hours, subject to the needs of the business.

Flexi-time involves flexible start and finish times around 'core working hours' within the limitations of the 'bandwidth' (the earliest and latest times between which hours can be worked) and allows you more choice over your working hours, subject to the operational requirements of the business area.

SECURITY CLEARANCE

An appointment will be dependent on you meeting the security vetting requirements for the post. A Criminal Record Check will be carried out on all applicants being considered for appointment, this will be conducted by AccessNI or relevant body, depending on the level of security assigned to the post.

While the majority of posts in the NICS require basic vetting, some posts may require a higher level of vetting and you will be required to provide additional personal information.

You should not be put off applying for a post because you have a conviction.

More information about security vetting can be found on page 40.

TYPES OF PLACEMENT

As there are a variety of placements on offer, you will be asked on your application to indicate **one** category preference from the options below.

Please note that your category preference must be relevant to the degree you are studying; this will be validated with your college/university during the recruitment process.

Further details on the degrees recommended for the placements can be found on pages 19-21.

Candidates will be able to select from the following categories to apply for a placement:

1. Policy
2. Accountancy / Finance
3. Communications / Marketing
4. Research and Data Analysis
5. Economics
6. Business Studies / Management
7. Human Resource Management
8. Law
9. Information Communication Technology (ICT)
10. Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
11. Forestry

12. Environment

13. Science

14. Project Management

15. Valuation Surveying

Further detail on the potential areas of work during placement can be found on the following pages.

Candidates should ensure they apply for a placement which aligns with their course of study.

TYPES OF PLACEMENT

1. POLICY

Departments with potential placements: DAERA, DfE & DfI.

Potential areas of work during placement:

- Contribute to policy development through evidence-based research and analysis of issues and legislation to help inform future policy legislation.
- Produce draft research reports, first draft policy submissions, draft consultation documents, briefing material, draft responses to AQs, FOI requests, Correspondence and Invitation Cases.
- Engage with a wide range of Stakeholders including other NICS Departments, local Councils, Public Authorities to inform and develop collaborative policy proposals.
- Assist with Stakeholder engagement and consultation by actively reviewing and evaluating previous policy initiatives.
- Contribute to the research, development & reporting and national control plans for the EU.

2. ACCOUNTANCY / FINANCE

Departments with potential placements: DfE & DfI.

Potential areas of work during placement:

- Gather, analyse and report financial information.
- Review and analyse expenditure trends.
- Review and assist in implementation of financial accounting policies.
- Assist in the development of governance structures and finance models.
- Provide assistance in preparing financial statements.
- Provide assistance in preparing and presenting financial information.

TYPES OF PLACEMENT

3. COMMUNICATIONS / MARKETING

Departments with potential placements: DAERA, DoF & PPS.

Potential areas of work during placement:

- Assist with the review, management and development of Departmental social media channels.
- Produce short videos to promote the work of the Department.
- Support colleagues in the organisation and delivery of events.
- Media monitoring.
- Editing videos.

4. RESEARCH AND DATA ANALYSIS

Departments with potential placements: DoF & PPS.

Potential areas of work during placement:

- Assist with data acquisition.
- Assist with data analysis and research.
- Assist with the presentation and dissemination of data and research findings effectively.

TYPES OF PLACEMENT

5. ECONOMICS

Departments with potential placements: DAERA, DfE, DfI & DoF.

Potential areas of work during placement:

As a Student Economist, you will be part of the NICS Economist Profession, a group consisting of approximately 140 economists. Potential duties include:

- Gather relevant economic data for the use in economic briefing and analysis, economic research projects and input to business cases and evaluations.
- Assist in the review and quality assurance of small expenditure business cases and post project evaluations.
- Maintain databases of relevant economic research and data.

**NICS
ECONOMIST
PROFESSION**

6. BUSINESS STUDIES / MANAGEMENT

Department with potential placements: DAERA.

Potential areas of work during placement:

- Assist in the analysis of the impact of proposed policies and identify mitigations.
- Liaise with others to help identify the impact of legislative changes to proposed policies and operations.
- Assist in the development, maintenance and updating of project plans and post project evaluation.

7. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Department with potential placement: DfI & DoF.

Potential areas of work during placement:

- Assist in the co-ordination of activities in relation to running recruitment competitions for all job roles across the NICS for analogous grades AA to Grade 6.
- Assist in the co-ordination of all activities in relation to permanently filling vacancies from available supply across the NICS.

TYPES OF PLACEMENT

8. LAW

Departments with potential placements: DAERA, DfI, DoF & PPS.

Potential areas of work during placement:

- Scrutinise documents to ensure compliance with legislation.
- Support the legislative process.
- Assist with the preparation of briefs, affidavits and exhibits for the High Court and preparing hearing bundles.
- Attend Court hearings occasionally.
- Accompany case handlers to client meetings and assist with preparation of attendance notes where appropriate.
- Assist with appropriate casework under supervision.
- Supporting training events.
- Assist with drafting and reviewing legislation under development.
- Assist with Ministerial support.
- Assist with stakeholder engagement.
- Assist with policy development.
- Liaise with other departments and officials in other UK nations.

TYPES OF PLACEMENT

9. INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Departments with potential placements: DAERA, DoF & DOJ.

Potential areas of work during placement:

Infrastructure and Service Management

Infrastructure and Service Management ICT students will learn how to complete incident management activities develop a knowledge and understanding of system administration and monitoring tools and provide technical advice and guidance to users.

Duties may include:

- Service desk and incident management;
- IT Operations;
- Application Support; and
- Network control and operation & Support.

Solution Development and Implementation

Solution Development and Implementation ICT students will develop fundamental programming skills and the capability to apply these to specific languages and platforms, as well as an understanding of the software development life-cycle.

Duties may include:

- Programming/software development;
- Information Content Authoring;

- Database design and Administration; and
- Systems design and testing – specific to their departmental needs.

Cyber Security

Cyber security is the practice of defending networks, data and technological systems from cyber-attacks. The role of security teams is to implement processes to reduce threats and review processes as threats evolve.

Duties may include:

- Support incident management and response teams;
- Engage with technical experts to assist to gather evidence for investigations;
- Assist in the creation and dissemination of security advice;
- Contribute to assessment of risks; and
- Input to Cyber Security related projects.

It is anticipated that majority of roles will be based within Infrastructure and Service Management.



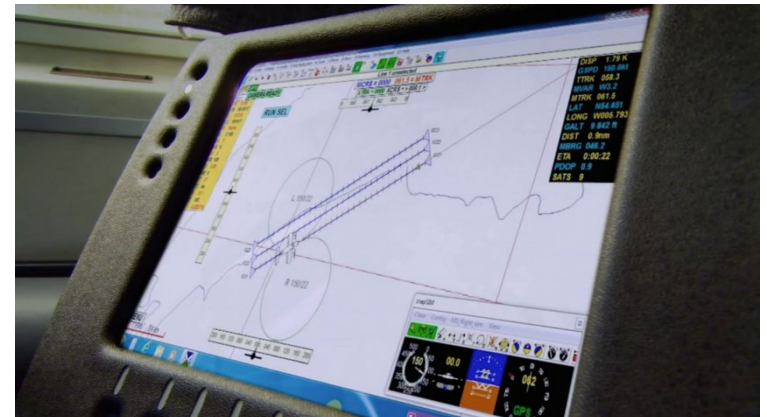
TYPES OF PLACEMENT

10. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

Departments with potential placements: DAERA & DfI.

Potential areas of work during placement:

- Manipulate and analyse spatially based environmental data to inform environmental reporting and land-based environmental decision making.
 - Manipulate and analyse geographical data and use the outcomes to inform area planning, temporary variations and demographic considerations for the future.
 - Undertake spatial environmental analytics to aid reporting on status and changes in environmental assets.
 - Assist in the creation of new and editing spatial datasets.
 - Field data capture, GIS editing, data management and support to assist in ensuring the accuracy of agricultural maps and payments.
 - Analysis of spatial data to inform environmental decision making and mapping of areas for improvement action.
 - Assist in projects related to Earth Observation using satellite and other remote imagery.
 - Production of reports resulting from statistically robust spatial analytics of land-based environmental data.
 - Use GIS desktop and server software to analyse and manage geographical information.
 - Validate mapping outputs and implement changes where required.
- Assist with update and publication of mapping with latest information across various GIS portals.
 - Provide GIS related advice and training to multi-disciplinary teams.



TYPES OF PLACEMENT

11. FORESTRY

Department with potential placements: DAERA.

Potential areas of work during placement:

The post-holders will report to the appointed Forest Officer in charge of the business area to which they are assigned and the main duties of the posts will include:

Forest Management & Inspection Services

- Assist with harvesting duties including forest mensuration and inventory work.
- Assist with forest management including regeneration, recreation, stewardship and inspection duties and site visits.

Forest Standards, Planning & Policies

- Assist with forest management planning, marketing and health and safety including GUS planning and stakeholder consultation.
- Assist with forest estate development to achieve climate change objectives.

Forest Grants & Regulation

- Assist with forestry grant development and scheme administration.
- Assist with forestry regulation such as felling licences.

Eligibility

Courses leading to a degree in Forestry or another educational qualification that has been assessed by the Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF) to meet a minimum requirement of 5 points.

Note: A list of current ICF Accredited courses can be found [here](#).

For information on [Careers in Forestry in the Republic of Ireland](#)

TYPES OF PLACEMENT

12. ENVIRONMENT

Departments with potential placements: DAERA & DfI.

Potential areas of work during placement:

- Assist with the development and implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility Schemes and Northern Ireland's Resources and Waste Strategy. (DAERA)
- Assist with the development of the Ammonia Strategy, the review of the Nutrients Action Programme, development of the nutrient processing and biogas and the production from livestock manures. (DAERA)
- Assist with site visits associated with ecological surveys, monitoring, catchment surveys and pollution incidents to collect, analyse and classify various samples using agreed standards. (DAERA)
- Assist with site visit records, collation, quality assurance, analysis, presentation and reporting of environmental data and information associated with various projects. Some of this work may be laboratory based. (DAERA)
- Assist with work across the CAFRE farmed estate to include a wide range of duties from milking, stock husbandry, field work etc. (DAERA)
- Assist with data generation and collation for CAFRE innovation projects delivered across the CAFRE Farmed Estate. (DAERA)
- Assist with information and data gathering for the delivery and reporting on metrics within the College Estate Strategy to 2030. (DAERA)
- Those placed within CAFRE will be expected to work outside normal office hours and at weekends on a rota basis. (DAERA)
- Assist with the survey, analysis, interpretation and management planning for terrestrial habitats, species and landscapes and to connect people with the natural environment. (DAERA)
- Assist with Undertaking various types of environmental surveys including preworks walk-over surveys and river corridor surveys, post works audit surveys and geo-morphological surveys. This will entail accessing construction sites and watercourses through rough terrain and remote from public roads. (DfI Rivers)
- Assist with consulting with the Government and non-Government conservation bodies and interest groups. (DfI Rivers)
- Assist with providing up-to-date environmental advice and information to staff from other disciplines. (DfI Rivers)
- Assist with identifying opportunities for environmental improvement. (DfI Rivers)

TYPES OF PLACEMENT

13. SCIENCE

Departments with potential placements: DAERA & DfI.

Potential areas of work during placement:

- Assist with the delivery of marine monitoring programmes, through the preparation of equipment, field collection and laboratory analysis of biological, physical and chemical parameters from NI marine and transitional waters. Undertake quality assurance and validation of data and analyses.
- Data compilation and analysis, interpretation and preparation of scientific reports. Preparation and formatting of data for geospatial mapping and presentation on Departmental IT platforms.
- Assist with the collation, quality assurance analysis, the development of innovative methods of spatial information analysis and visualisation, reporting and presentation of information associated with various projects.
- Assist with laboratory analysis – undertaking analysis for the provision of a quality assured evidence base for environmental monitoring programmes using a range of analytical techniques.
- Assist with delivery of education practical's and undertake laboratory analysis/investigative work on technology transfer projects relating to food products.

14. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Departments with potential placements: DAERA.

Potential areas of work during placement:

- Assist in the design and development of major programme and related projects.
- Prepare programme and project documentation.
- Monitor progress of workstreams and projects to ensure effective governance and co-ordination of projects and interdependencies.
- Monitor and mitigate risk and issues.
- Use specialist project management software packages.
- Assist with programme communications and events.
- Work within multi-disciplinary design teams.
- Liaison with Legislation Branch to observe passage of subordinate legislation through Assembly.

TYPES OF PLACEMENT

15. VALUATION SURVEYING

Departments with potential placements: DoF.

Potential areas of work during placement:

- Referencing property measurements, characteristics and ownership details for domestic and non-domestic properties for rating purposes;
 - Preparing valuations using available comparisons and valuation models;
 - Maintaining file records and computer databases to a required standard including writing reports and keeping records;
 - Drawing electronic sketches and surveys, uploading photographs and documents, verifying the completeness of information held, maintaining data quality;
 - Identifying and verifying property sales information and updating sales and sales inspection databases;
 - Liaising with external stakeholders and other areas of LPS to ensure valuation listings are up to date and properties are correctly identified and addressed;
- Assisting with, under the supervision of a valuer, the inspection, measurement of property for a range of valuation purposes including negotiations and facilitating the preparation of valuation reports for a valuer;
 - Research and investigation into sales and lettings comparisons for domestic and non-domestic land and property, planning history, previous uses, environmental considerations, land ownership and the availability of alternative properties.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

All applicants must, by the closing date for applications:

1. Be expecting to have successfully completed their second year examinations of their degree by the end of the 2026/2027 academic year*/**/**.

* Applications will not be accepted from students who will complete their degree on or before 2026. Second year examinations should normally be completed by applicants by Summer 2027.

**Applications for Forestry placements will be accepted after either first or second year examinations.

***Open University Students must have 240 credits prior to starting their placements in July/August 2027.

AND

2. Have the opportunity to undertake up to a one year placement for the 2027/2028 academic year.

AND

3. Be students currently studying towards one of the degrees recommended below for their chosen category.

FOR FORESTRY PLACEMENTS AND VALUATION SURVEYING PLACEMENTS ONLY, APPLICANTS MUST ALSO:

4. Have a current driving license which permits the license holder to drive in Northern Ireland.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Category	Degree(s) Recommended
Policy	All courses with high policy content - e.g. Sociology, English, Psychology, Business Studies, History, Criminology, Law and International Relations, Geography, anthropology, planning, criminology etc.
Accountancy / Finance	Accounting, Economics, Finance, Mathematics and Business Management.
Communications / Marketing	All Communications degrees, Interactive Media, Marketing, Film and Video Production, Accounting and Marketing, Journalism and International Relations.
Research & Data Analytics	All Maths, Finance, Economics, Physics, Pharmaceutical Science and Engineering, Psychology, Computing and Environmental courses, Science, criminology, sociology, politics, geography, history, anthropology, business, management, philosophy.
Economics	Economics, or a subject where the study of economics is a major component. 'Major component' is defined as: At least 50% of the course in economics. Candidates must list all modules and briefly describe their relevant economic modules to allow the panel to determine that their qualification contains 50% economics.
Business Studies / Management	Business Courses, Marketing, Human Resources, Management, Finance, Accounting, Travel and Tourism, Sport and Leisure etc.
Human Resources Management	Human Resources courses, Business / Management courses where module(s) studied include Human Resources. For Business / Management course candidates must list and briefly describe their relevant HR modules to allow the panel to determine eligibility.
Law	Law or Law in conjunction with another subject (e.g. Law with Politics, Law with French etc)

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Category	Degree(s) Recommended
Information Communication Technology (ICT)	All courses containing high IT content - e.g. Computer Science, Business IT, Software Engineering etc. Only those courses with a computing content of 50% or more will be considered relevant. Candidates must list all modules to allow the panel to determine that their qualification contains 50% computing content.
Geographic Information Systems (GIS)	Geography (must have completed GIS module), Environmental Science (must have completed GIS module), Biology (must have completed GIS module), Product Design, Software and Electronic Engineering, Computer Design, Interactive Computing.
Forestry**	Courses leading to a degree in Forestry or another educational qualification that has been assessed by the Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF) to meet a minimum requirement of 5 points. Note: A list of current ICF Accredited courses can be found at: https://www.charteredforesters.org/what-we-do/education-careers For information on Careers in Forestry in the Republic of Ireland N.B Courses that do not lead to a professional qualification in forestry but have a small forestry content within them will NOT be eligible.
Environment	All courses with high environment content - e.g. Environmental, Biology, Environmental Management, Ecology, Biological Sciences, Science, Energy, Geography.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Category	Degree(s) Recommended
Science	All courses with high science or GIS content – e.g. Biology, Chemistry, Energy Pharmaceutical, Zoology, Nutrition etc.
Project Management	All courses with high proportion of project management.
Valuation Surveying	Students currently studying for an RICS accredited BA/BSc Honours Degree in a real estate or other property related discipline where Valuation, Investment Appraisal, Asset Management and Development form major components* of the degree. *'Major components' is defined as: at least 50% of the course.

The list of recommended degrees above is not exhaustive. The onus is on you to ensure you provide sufficient details in your application form (details of modules, % of degree component, etc.) to allow the selection panel to make a well-informed decision.

No additional information or evidence provided in support of your experience will be considered at any time after the closing date for applications.

Please note: Candidates will only be appointed if confirmation is obtained from the college/university that they are required to return and complete their course, that they have successfully completed their second year exams by the end of the 2026/27 academic year and that they are studying the course specified on their application form.

Relevant or equivalent qualifications: If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide details of modules studied etc so that a well-informed decision can be made.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Placements are challenging roles demanding commitment to excellence and the highest standards of output quality.

If you want to be a part of this essential work and to grow and develop personally and professionally then we are looking for you.

The work assigned to you will depend on where you are posted. While the precise duties and responsibilities of individual posts will vary, below are examples of general activities that may be undertaken by students during their placement:

- **Analysis and Research:** assist with data acquisition, analysis and evaluation, assist with research on a range of Departmental issues including drafting papers. Identify, review and summarise relevant research and policy reports. Assist with the presentation and dissemination of data and research findings effectively using a range of innovative data visualisation tools.
- **Policy / Legislation / Governance:** involvement in regulation, grants and auditing. May include preparing draft responses to internal and external correspondence. May be involved in contributing to the drafting of subordinate legislation, and act as a support role in the team. Apply skills and knowledge appropriate to interpret regulation, legislation, policy and corporate governance.

- **Strategic / Operational:** discrete work area day to day, carry out routine tasks such as database management, assist in data updates / monitoring, provide data and charts to input into requests and queries from a range of internal and external stakeholders. Receive and handle requests for information and support.

- **Develop knowledge and skills:** through reading relevant publications and attending seminars, training events and conferences. Seek and act on feedback.

The above list is not exhaustive. You may also be required to carry out other activities as directed by your line manager.

Guidance and support will be provided by your line manager and other members of the team, enabling placement students to develop a fuller awareness of their business environment and how it meets the requirements of customers both within the NICS and members of the general public.

Placement students will be offered training appropriate to meet business needs.

WHAT'S ON OFFER

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING YOUR PLACEMENT YEAR?

The NICS is committed to ensuring that professionals across all disciplines are equipped to deliver in full the Government's agenda, meet the demands of modernising Government and develop their own careers and skills to the highest possible standards.

As a team member, you will be given guidance and support to help you do your work and to develop a fuller awareness of the Department's business environment and how it meets the requirements of stakeholders. We want you to enjoy your experience so that you leave feeling you have really experienced core personal development.

STARTING WORK

At the beginning of your placement, you will agree specific objectives with your line manager and identify subsequent development needs. The setting of these clear objectives will help you, your manager and your team to align your actions to the strategic priorities and values of your department.

Throughout your placement you will be concentrating on the achievement of these objectives and will be given the necessary support and training to help you understand your job. On completion, these activities should be discussed with your line manager to ensure your needs were met.

MEASURING HOW FAR YOU HAVE COME

Towards the end of your placement, you and your manager will assess your achievements against these targets to evaluate your individual contribution and perhaps identify areas of focus that will help you in your future career.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT?

When you look back at your time in the NICS we hope that you will recognise you had meaningful goals and have a sense of personal satisfaction that you developed new competencies which will further your career growth.



WHAT'S ON OFFER

NICS STUDENT NETWORK

The NICS Student Network, established by students for students, aims to connect placement students from a range of departments, providing advice, guidance and encouragement to all students throughout their placement year in NICS.

The Student Network Committee is organised into four core areas:

- Support
- Events
- Promotions
- Evaluations

The Student Network Committee is responsible for organising a series of networking events to provide advice and learning opportunities for all students and maintaining the Student Network intranet hub.

Opportunities are available for all students to be involved.



WHAT'S ON OFFER

NICS STAFF SERVICES AND SUPPORT

The following is a small sample of the services and support on offer to Students during their placement year:

NICS WELL is the health and wellbeing programme for the NI Civil Service. The WELL programme aims to improve the health and wellbeing of all NICS staff and incorporates support, education and information on a wide range of health and wellbeing issues. WELL work in partnership with the Occupational Health Service to provide a range of services including health roadshows and online information sessions to promote health and wellbeing.

NICSSA improves people's lives by delivering a wide range of sport and leisure services to both members and non members. Students can join and use the facilities at the Pavilion in Stormont for a small monthly fee.

Inspire Workplaces is the leading provider of workplace wellbeing solutions, delivering mental health and wellbeing support to some of the UK and Ireland's leading public, private and third sector organisations. Staff can avail of support by contacting a free 24/7 helpline service, and one-to-one confidential counselling sessions are available to all staff who are experiencing difficulties. The programme is completely confidential.

The Charity for Civil Servants offers a range of digital wellbeing resources and tools for health and wellbeing. As part of this offering NICS employees and/or their family members are also eligible for 6 fully funded counselling sessions with Relate NI.

A full range of services and support groups available to students will be highlighted during their induction.



STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS 2025-26

The NICS is the perfect place to choose your placement – read on to hear some feedback from recent placement students on their experiences with us ...



“During my placement with the NICSHR Transformation Team, I have worked on a range of communications and marketing projects, including designing the NICSHR newsletter, supporting internal campaigns, and helping to improve the HR intranet. I have also represented NICS at careers fairs across Northern Ireland, speaking to students about career opportunities in the Civil Service. The placement has helped me develop my communication, digital marketing, and networking skills while gaining valuable experience in a professional environment. It has given me a greater understanding of public sector communications and helped me build confidence in planning my future career.”

CAITLIN LOWRY

BSc Marketing student at Ulster University. Completing placement in DoF, NICSHR Transformation Team.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



"My primary focus is the Operational Delivery Apprentice Scheme and Student Placement Recruitment Schemes. Alongside that, I have been able to contribute further with organising and running Recruitment Events and Attending Stormont Visits with the finance minister. Dealing with recruitment processes within NICS has been quite the experience, working with external partners on a day-to-day basis, accurately tracking the recruitment process, and being able to serve the public and fellow colleagues has been very fulfilling. Not only has Placement with NICS improved my administrative duties but also provided me with Networking Opportunities that allow a hands-on experience to the job. Placement within NICS isn't just another desk job, but an opportunity to grow in work and your network. It should not be overlooked, and I would highly recommend it to any student in any subject area, you wouldn't regret it."

LEWIS ORR

BSc Business Management student at Ulster University. Completing placement in DoF, NICSHR Resourcing Team.



"My ICT placement has been a fantastic opportunity to gain real-world experience in IT support and develop practical technical skills. I've enjoyed helping users resolve issues, learning from experienced team members, and contributing to the day-to-day delivery of ICT services. The placement has increased my confidence, strengthened my technical knowledge, and given me a much clearer understanding of working within a large organisation."

RYAN BROTHERSTON

BSc Computer Science student at Ulster University. Completing ICT placement in DAERA.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



“Every day in my office was different, with my role involving the support of departmental solicitors across a wide range of civil litigation cases from the initial preparation stages through to court proceedings. One of the most rewarding aspects of the placement was gaining hands-on experience in significant Judicial Review cases, where I was entrusted with responsibilities such as drafting affidavits and exhibits, preparing court bundles, conducting legal research and regularly attending court hearings. The solicitors placed a great deal of trust in me and provided a level of responsibility and independence that enabled me to develop my analytical and problem-solving skills in a real-world setting. I also had the opportunity to liaise with clients, medical experts and counsel, which enhanced my communication and interpersonal skills while broadening my professional network and commercial awareness. While studying law at university provides the academic foundation, seeing the law in practice has given me a genuine understanding of the role of a solicitor and will stand me in good stead as I begin applying for graduate opportunities. It is an experience that has significantly shaped my career aspirations and one that I would not have gained without taking a year out on placement.”

THEA LIGGETT

Currently studies Law at Queens University. Completing placement within DoF, Departmental Solicitor’s Office.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

THE NICS 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.

Find out more about [Diversity and Inclusion](#) in the NICS on the NICS recruitment website.

(Clicking on this link will open a new window/tab)

We welcome applications from people regardless of their religious belief, race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation.

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

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:

Skills and Capacity: Equipping our workforce to meet current and future demands;

Experience and Environment: Creating a supportive work environment; and

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: 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 reasonable adjustment, please indicate 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 during this recruitment process.

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

Further information for disabled candidates can be found on the [information for disabled applicants](#) section of the NICS recruitment website.

(Clicking on this link will open a new window/tab)

SELECTION PROCESS

OVERVIEW OF SELECTION PROCESS

Stage of Competition	Projected Timeframe
Formal Application Opens	12 th October 2026
Closing Date for Formal Applications	23rd October 2026 (12 noon UK time)
Eligibility Check	2 nd November 2026
Invites to Interview Issue	6 th November 2026
Interviews	16 th – 19 th November 2026 in Europa Hotel, Belfast
Interview Outcome	By end of November 2026
Conditional Offers Issue	December 2026 / January 2027
Formal Offers Issue	June / July 2027 (following June exam results)

The Selection Process for this competition is as follows:

1. Online Formal Application form;
2. Eligibility Check;
3. Invitation to Interview;
4. Merit List.

SELECTION PROCESS

Stage 1 – Online Formal Application Form

- Read the Candidate Information Booklet.
- Complete your Online Formal Application Form making sure you supply a valid email address. Forms must be submitted by **12 noon on 23rd October 2026**.
- You will be asked to indicate your preference for placement type which must be relevant to your degree. If you are offered and refuse a post that matches your preference, no further offers will be made.

Stage 2 - Eligibility Check

An assessment of the evidence provided against the relevant eligibility criteria will take place, with those who meet the eligibility criteria progressing to the interview stage.

Stage 3 – Invitation to Interview

Candidates who meet the eligibility criteria will be invited to attend an interview. The interviews will take place in the **Europa Hotel, Belfast** from **16th – 19th November 2026**.

Stage 4 - Merit List

Candidates who meet the required standard and pass mark at the Interview Stage will be deemed suitable for appointment and will be placed on a list in order of merit, based on their choice of placement, 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.

SELECTION PROCESS

INTERVIEW STAGE

Competence Based Interview

The selection process will include a short competency-based interview.

Interview questions have been designed to test your knowledge and skills in a number of competencies and to award marks accordingly. The assessors will conduct an interview in which they will ask you to give examples of when you have demonstrated the competencies being assessed. Advice on how to prepare for the interview can be found on page 36 but you should note that it is more important that you respond to the questions the assessors are asking you than simply repeating a pre-prepared answer.

Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. The selection process will assess candidates against the [NICS Competency Framework](#) level 1.

You should familiarise yourself with the Competency Framework as this forms the basis of the interview selection process.

You are not allowed to bring notes or refer to these during the interview.

The competencies candidates will be assessed against in the interview are:

STRATEGIC CLUSTER – SETTING DIRECTION

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: 40

PEOPLE CLUSTER – ENGAGING PEOPLE

2. Collaborating & 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 achieve business objectives and goals.

Marks available: 30

SELECTION PROCESS

PERFORMANCE CLUSTER - DELIVERING RESULTS

3. Delivering at Pace

Effectiveness in this area means focusing on delivering timely performance with energy and taking responsibility and accountability for quality outcomes.

Marks available: 30

Total Marks Available: 100

Overall Pass Mark: 60

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews will take place in Europa Hotel, Belfast from the 16th – 19th November 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.

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

HELP WITH MAKING YOUR APPLICATION

You can get advice or assistance with making an application from the Employability, Careers and Skills teams within your University. In addition, The Careers Service provides an impartial, all-age careers information, advice and guidance service, to help young people and adults make informed choices about their future career paths. You can contact one of The Careers Service's professionally qualified Careers Advisors at Careers Service.

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.

E: info@niuse.org.uk

T: 0044 (0)28 71 377709

Text: 0044 (0)28 71 3720

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE & RECRUITMENT GUIDANCE

Artificial Intelligence can be a useful tool to support your application, however, all examples and statements provided must be truthful, factually accurate and taken directly from your own experience. Where plagiarism has been identified (presenting the ideas and experiences of others, or generated by artificial intelligence, as your own) applications may be withdrawn.

Please see our candidate guidance, via the link below for more information on appropriate and inappropriate use.

[Artificial Intelligence & Recruitment Guidance](#)

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, bear in mind it **requires** you to:

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

A competence-based interview **does not** however require you to:

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

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

- **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 competencies being assessed. During their discussion with you they may wish to focus on specific aspects of the experience you are describing or ask you to talk about other examples. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples that best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work/life experiences.

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

COMPETENCIES

Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. You should familiarise yourself with the NICS Competency Framework as this forms the basis of the interview selection process.

The Framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the NICS 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.

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 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.

We will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed.

It is intended that the merit list for this competition should remain live for a period of one year.

NICSHR PRIVACY NOTICE

NICSHR are committed to protecting your privacy. The NICSHR privacy notice is available via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

OFFERS OF APPOINTMENT

Candidates will only receive one offer of appointment which, if not accepted, will generally result in withdrawal from the competition. Appointments will be for a duration of no more than 51 weeks.

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 due to disability you require any reasonable adjustments. Details of any disability are used only 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.

RIGHT TO WORK AND NATIONALITY REQUIREMENTS

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

We must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom and satisfy the Nationality Requirements for appointment into 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 who have made a valid application for settled or pre-settled status under the [European Union Settlement Scheme \(EUSS\)](#); or

(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 also 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](#).

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

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

RIGHT TO WORK AND NATIONALITY REQUIREMENTS

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 website.

SECURITY

For the majority of Student Placement posts the level of vetting is a Baseline Standard. However, for some posts a higher level of security vetting (for example, Security Check, Developed Vetting and/or Counter Terrorist Check) will be required.

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 [Government baseline personnel security standard](#).

We will organise for a Criminal Record Check on all successful applicants to be carried out by AccessNI.

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: <https://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk> in the Recruitment Policy and Procedures manual.

Security Policy for AccessNI Disclosure Information is available at: <https://www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk> under Useful Information.

The AccessNI code of practice can be accessed via www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni

For more information regarding AccessNI checks, please see: www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/accessni-criminal-record-checks.

RIGHT TO WORK AND NATIONALITY REQUIREMENTS

Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted normally after interview 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.

CONTACT DETAILS

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 DoF website www.finance-ni.gov.uk

The NICS is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

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

FEEDBACK

The NICS 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/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.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any questions about the competition process please contact: nicsrecruitment@talentdog.com

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

Thank you for your
interest in this role.

