Northern Ireland
Civil Service



NICS Care Leavers Employability Scheme

Candidate Information Booklet

Contents

Introduction to the Employability Scheme for Care Leavers 3
About the NICS 4
About the roles 5
i) Administrative Officers 5
ii) Industrial 1 River Workers 6
Who can apply for the scheme? 7
Terms and conditions 7
Salary 7
Holidays 7
Security vetting 7
Medical 8
Hours of Work 8
Progress Reviews 9
Conditions Of Appointment 9
Build Your Career 9
Support During Your Placement 10
How to Apply 10
Expression of Interest form 10
Matching a Person to a Placement – Informal Discussion 10
Additional Information for Applicants 11
Possible Impact on benefits 11
Diversity & Inclusion 11
NICS privacy notice 11
Offers Of appointment 11
Changes in personal circumstances and contact details 11
Transgender requirements 11
Disability requirements 12
Documentation 12
Right To Work and Nationality Requirements 12
Security 13
Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form 13

Introduction to the Employability Scheme for Care Leavers

Thank you for considering joining the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS).

As one of Northern Ireland's largest employers, we offer young people from every background the chance to build their future and make a difference.

Start your NICS career with a paid 51-week placement designed for care experienced young people. There are up to 19 placements available across the scheme. Successfully complete the scheme and final evaluation, and you will be offered a permanent job with opportunities to grow your career.

This scheme may be suitable if you:

- ✓ are a care leaver between 16 and 30 years of age;
- ✓ are happy to work and learn;
- ✓ can adapt to change;
- ✓ enjoy solving problems and getting things done on time;
- ✓ like to work in a varied and busy environment; and
- ✓ want to develop your skills and build a career.

No previous experience or qualifications are necessary as you will be learning from day one.

The closing date for applications is **12 noon on Monday 30 November 2026. Late submissions will not be accepted.**

We want every applicant to have the opportunity to perform at their best. In line with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, we will consider requests for reasonable adjustments to any assessment. See the Disability Requirements section for more information.

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

About the NICS

The NICS is made up of nine departments that help the Northern Ireland Executive and its Ministers.

Our work helps shape government plans and deliver important public services in areas such as health, education, justice, the environment, jobs, transport and support for communities. The Public Prosecution Service is also staffed by civil servants.

Visit the Northern Ireland Executive website to learn about the **work of each department**. (The link will open in a new window or tab.)

As a civil servant, you can make a positive difference while working with integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality—values that guide everything we do.





About the roles

There are two types of roles that are available as part of the scheme:

i) Administrative Officers; and
ii) Industrial 1 River Workers.

i) Administrative Officers

As an administrative officer, you can do work that matters and help deliver services that make a real difference to people.

The work can be busy, but you will be part of a team that will support you as you learn. We're looking for someone who is enthusiastic, ready to learn and build new skills.

During your placement, you'll learn how to:

- communicate clearly with different people, including customers, and explain information, decisions and next steps;
- handle different situations – face to face, by phone, in writing or online;
- find, understand and use information to make decisions or give clear answers; and
- use computer systems confidently to complete tasks, process information and help with phone enquiries.

Opportunities are available in a range of NICS departments and locations across Northern Ireland:

Department	Branch	Location
Finance	Employee Relations	Bruce Street, Belfast
	CPD Construction Division, Procurement Operations Branch*	Clare House, Belfast
	LPS Revenue & Benefits Division	Lanyon Plaza, Belfast
Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs	Environmental Principles	Clare House, Belfast
Communities	Benefit Support	Belfast City Centre
Education	Special Education Needs (SEN) Review Team	Rathgael House, Bangor
	Tackling Educational Disadvantage (TED) Team	Rathgael House, Bangor
Health	Together for Families Social Care	Castle Buildings, Stormont, Belfast
	Reform Programme Management Office	Castle Buildings, Stormont, Belfast
Justice	Forensic Science Corporate Services Stores Team*	Seapark, Carrickfergus
	Estates & Sustainability Branch*	Knockview Buildings, Stormont Estate

* Please note that CTC security clearance is required for these posts

Use the Expression of Interest form to tell us which opportunities interest you and which locations you can travel to.

ii) Industrial 1 River Workers

As a River Worker, you will be part of a team helping to keep rivers, waterways and drainage areas safe and well maintained. You will learn practical skills on the job, build your confidence through training and follow health and safety guidance to protect yourself, your team and the public.

Your work may include:

- clearing leaves, branches and other blockages from rivers, waterways, drains and metal grates;
- cutting grass, bushes and other vegetation;
- putting up and repairing fences, and helping to lay pipes;
- helping with concreting and small construction projects;
- learning how to work safely by following guidance from supervisors and engineers;
- taking part in training to develop practical skills and build your confidence;
- supporting the response to flood emergencies when needed, including some work outside normal hours; and
- driving departmental vehicles across Northern Ireland when required*.

* *A full driving licence is required for river worker roles. Where a successful candidate does not hold one, NICS will fund them to obtain their licence. Further details are provided under Conditions of Employment.*

Due to the nature of the work, you must be aged 18 or over when your River Worker placement begins. If you are 17 when you apply, you may be considered provided you turn 18 before the placement starts.

Find a location near you					
Newtownards BT22 2SR	Lurgan BT66 6NQ	Portadown BT63 5QE	Banbridge BT32 4AP	Newry BT24 8AG	Newcastle BT33 0LG

Use the Expression of Interest form to tell us which opportunities interest you and which locations you can travel to.

Who can apply for the scheme?

To apply for the scheme, you must be:

- aged between 16[1] and 30 years of age;
- have been in care for at least 13 continuous weeks, ending on or after your 16th birthday and is (or was) eligible to receive support from Health & Social Care Trusts to transition to independence[2]; and
- legally entitled to work in the UK and meet the **nationality requirements**.

Terms and conditions

Salary

You'll earn the following salary based on full-time hours:

- **Administrative Officer:** £26,449 a year (under review)
- **Industrial 1 River Worker:** £25,796 a year (under review)

Holidays

You will have 25 days of annual leave during the 51-week placement, based on full-time hours, as well as the current 12 public holidays.

Security vetting

Before you start, you will need to complete security checks for your role. Most placements require a basic check but some administrative roles involve access to sensitive personal information, so they require a higher level of vetting. If this applies to your role, you will be asked to provide some extra personal information. A criminal conviction does not automatically prevent you from being offered a placement. We will consider the information on a case-by-case basis.

The following administrative officer posts require Counter Terrorism Check (CTC) clearance before the placement begins:

1 Candidates for River Worker placements must be aged 18 and over at time of starting
2 Candidates will be required to upload a letter from their Health & Social Care Trust as evidence as part of the application.

Department	Administrative Officer post	Location
Department of Finance	CPD Construction Division	Clare House, Belfast
Department of Justice	Forensic Science NI Corporate Services	Seapark, Carrickfergus
Department of Justice	Estates & Sustainability Branch	Clare House, Belfast

To Note: If you are offered any of these placements, we will complete the preplacement checks and security clearance as quickly as we can. This process can take time, so we would ask for your patience and cooperation throughout. Please respond quickly to any requests for information to help avoid delays.

The successful candidate for the Forensics post will need to provide a DNA sample. This helps identify and rule out any DNA accidentally left on casework material by staff members. Your sample and DNA profile will be kept securely and will not be used for any other purpose.

Medical

Given the nature of the role, candidates applying for River Worker placements in DfI will be required to pass a medical before a placement can be offered.

Hours of Work

AO Placements:

You'll work 37 hours a week, not including meal breaks. Your usual working pattern will be:

9.00 am–5.00 pm, Monday to Friday

Industrial 1 Placements in DfI Rivers:

You'll work 37 hours across five days, not including lunch breaks. Your usual working pattern will be:

8.00 am – 4.40 pm, Monday to Thursday

8.00 am – 1.15 pm on Friday

Requests to work reduced hours may be considered. If agreed, this would mean working fewer days each week rather than shorter working days.

You may be asked to help respond to evening or weekend flood emergencies. This is optional and will only happen after completion of appropriate training. Any hours worked outside your normal schedule will receive the appropriate additional payments and allowances.

Progress Reviews

You will have regular check-ins with your line manager. This is a chance to talk about how you are settling in, agree goals and make sure you have the support, guidance and development you need. You will have a final review at week 45 when you will discuss your progress and find out whether you have successfully completed the placement.

Conditions Of Appointment

Successful completion of the placement period and final evaluation is a condition of permanent appointment. If you successfully complete the scheme, you will be confirmed as permanent.

DfI Rivers Agency: You will need a driving licence for a placement with DfI Rivers Agency. If you do not already have a licence, we will pay for your provisional licence at the start of your placement and pay for driving lessons (26 lessons over 6 months and 1 re-sit if necessary). If you need extra lessons and re-sits funding may be available and will be considered based on your individual circumstances.

Build Your Career

The NICS offers lots of ways to grow your career, explore different roles and gain experience with other organisations.

Support During Your Placement

As well as support from your Health & Social Care Trust PA / Support Worker or VOYPiC Development/Project Worker, you'll have a workplace buddy you can turn to for questions, advice and help. Your manager will explain your role, arrange training, give useful feedback and work with you to provide any extra support you need.

How to Apply

Expression of Interest form

If you are interested, complete the expression of interest form and questionnaire, **selecting one role only**; you cannot apply for both roles. You may select more than one location, as long as you are able to travel to each. We will try to offer you a preferred post, but this may not always be possible. If you need help with your form, ask your PA / Support Worker or VOYPIC Development/Project Worker.

We'll check that your application is complete and that you meet the age, care leaver and nationality requirements. **If you do not meet these requirements, your application unfortunately cannot progress.**

All candidates' questionnaire answers will be assessed fairly using the same pre-agreed criteria. Some questions will be weighted to help us rate candidates on merit.

Matching a Person to a Placement – Informal Discussion

If there are more suitable candidates than placements available, you may be invited to an informal discussion. If helpful, you may wish to be accompanied by your PA/Support Worker or VOYPIC Development/Project Worker.

This is an informal, two-way conversation. We want to get to know you and hear about your interests, strengths and what you would like to learn. It is also your chance to find out more about the role, meet us, ask questions and see whether the opportunity feels right for you.

Additional Information for Applicants

Possible Impact on benefits

To understand how taking part in the scheme could affect Housing Benefit or any other benefits, candidates should seek advice from their Work Coach (DfC Job & Benefits Office), Advice NI and/or Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Diversity & Inclusion

THE NICS IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER.

The NICS values and welcomes diversity and is committed to creating a truly inclusive workplace.

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

Find out more about Diversity and Inclusion in the NICS on the NICS recruitment website: **Diversity & Inclusion** (Clicking on this link will open a new window/tab).

NICS privacy notice

NICS are committed to protecting your privacy. The recruitment team will manage expressions of interest on behalf of NICS, in line with the NICS privacy notice available via **NICS Recruitment Privacy Notice**.

Offers Of appointment

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 tell us as soon as possible if your personal circumstances or contact details change. It is important that the NICS team has up-to-date contact details for you, including your current e-mail address.

Transgender requirements

If you are going through a phase of transition in respect of gender and wish this to be taken into consideration, to enable you to take part in the assessment process please contact NICS. Any information you provide will be treated confidentially and will not affect the selection process.

Disability requirements

On the expression of interest form, we will ask if you need any extra support or reasonable adjustments because of a disability. This is to help you to attend the assessment process. Any information you provide will only be used for this purpose and will not affect the selection process.

If you are being considered for a placement, we may ask you to tell us about any adjustments you would need at work.

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

You must be legally entitled to work in the UK and meet the nationality requirements for appointment into the NICS. Please note **ALL** applicants will have their nationality checked.

Applicants must be either:

(i) a UK or Irish national;

(ii) an EU, Swiss, Icelandic or Liechtenstein national with settled or pre-settled status under the **European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS)**; or

(iii) Nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Iceland or Liechtenstein have made a valid application for settled or pre-settled status under the **European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS)**; or

(iv) a Turkish national, or eligible family member with the right to work in the Civil Service; or

(v) an eligible family member of an EU, EEA, Swiss national.

ALL candidates are required to state their nationality in Section 2 of the Expression of Interest form.

For candidates applying under categories (iii) – (vii) that requires proof of your right to work, you must also:

State the nationality category under which you are applying; and provide a share code so we can check your right to work in the UK. Further information on obtaining your '**Share code**' is available **here**.

If your right to work status is time limited, we will carry out further checks during your employment.

Your application will be rejected if you do not provide the required information.

Further information is available in the **Nationality Guidance section of the NICS Recruitment website**.

Security

Before starting a placement, you must complete the security checks required for the role. You will be asked to provide identification documents and complete an AccessNI application.

Some posts involving sensitive information require a higher level of vetting and a small number will need a Counter Terrorist check. We will tell you about what information is needed.

Further information regarding the Baseline Personnel Security Standard, including acceptable documents is available via **Welcome to GOV.UK**.

You should not be put off applying if you have a conviction. Criminal record information will be handled confidentially.

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

You must provide the requested information by the deadline, or your application may be withdrawn.

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.