



Department for the

Economy

An Roinn

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www.economy-ni.gov.uk

Candidate Information Booklet

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING BOARD NORTHERN IRELAND - APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD

Application forms and this information pack can be made available in other formats – including Braille, Large Print, audio formats, etc.

Please email Public Appointments Unit (PAU) at: PAU@economy-ni.gov.uk or telephone:

028 9052 9282 (Yvonne Green) TextRelay: 18001 028 9052 9282

All reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the needs of applicants/candidates with a disability.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING BOARD NORTHERN IRELAND (CITB NI)

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The Department for the Economy (DfE) and CITB NI are committed to the principles of public appointment based on merit with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process.

We are also committed to equality of opportunity and welcome application forms from all suitably qualified applicants irrespective of religious belief,

gender, race, political opinion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or whether or not they have dependents.

Women, people with a disability and those from minority ethnic communities are currently under-represented on public boards and applications from members of these groups would be particularly welcome.

A public appointment to a Board gives individuals from different backgrounds and with specific skills and experience a chance to help make decisions that affect all our lives. Board appointments are a great opportunity to give something back to the community, whilst developing your own skills.

We are operating a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) in this competition for applicants with a disability. Applicants with a disability who meet all of the criteria at the sift stage will automatically be offered an interview. Their application will not be subjected to any short-listing which may take place.

FOREWORD

The purpose of CITB NI is to encourage the adequate training of those employed, or intending to be employed, in the Construction Industry in Northern Ireland. The requirement for a body to work with industry and stakeholders to ensure a competent and qualified workforce is as needed today as it has ever been.

The construction industry is a significant driver for our economy. Key to its contribution is a stable, well-resourced and skilled workforce. It provides our society not only with the built environment to conduct our activities, but also the essential services such as water & sewerage, roads and energy networks that drives the economy and provides the population with the stable and healthy environment that it needs. As an industry that provides many routes to access rewarding and well-paid jobs, whether joining the industry at an unskilled, skilled or professional level, it provides routes of progression to meet both the ambition and ability of the individual and their employers.

Our strategy embraces the DfE Ministers direction to encourage Good Jobs, Widening Participation, Improving Productivity, and driving the Net Zero Carbon agenda. Therefore, it is vital that the Board of CITB NI broadly reflects the Construction Industry in Northern Ireland and we are keen to invite applications from a wide range of backgrounds.

The CITB NI Board, working in partnership with industry and stakeholders has reviewed its strategic priorities. As a result, it is embarking on a review of the support mechanisms it deploys to meet the growing skills issues within the sector. Now is a time for industry to contribute to long lasting changes that will improve the skills and competencies of the next generation of the construction workforce.

As a board member you would have an opportunity to be part of an important strategic challenge, a chance to really make a difference to our industry and the economy. I would urge anyone who is interested in helping to lead CITB NI through the exciting challenges and opportunities, of the next few years, to apply. If you are successful, CITB NI would look forward to welcoming you as a new member of the Board.

Noel Brady
Chair, CITB NI

SECTION ONE

Introduction and background to CITB NI

1. The general purpose of CITB NI is to encourage the training of those employed, or intending to be employed, in the construction industry in Northern Ireland. It does this through key functions such as collecting statutory levy under the Industrial Training Levy (Construction Industry) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025 from construction business considered to be “in scope”, paying grants for training, providing labour market intelligence, mapping skills, providing training advice and developing qualifications. Details of CITB NI’s Strategic Plan 2020-2025 can be found at [53114b29-8e98-4242-8add-32e167ee3335.pdf \(citbni.org.uk\)](https://citbni.org.uk/files/53114b29-8e98-4242-8add-32e167ee3335.pdf) and performance (Annual Report) at <https://citbni.org.uk/CITB/files/4b/4b9b3254-c484-43f0-8a20-cf72ba4799df.pdf>
2. The Department for the Economy is seeking to appoint 4 members to the Board of CITB NI. It is planned to make the appointments by September 2026. Two members required will be employer representatives and two members will be employee representatives. The term of office is for three years and may be renewable for a second term.
3. A public appointment to a Board gives individuals from different backgrounds and with specific skills and expertise a chance to help make decisions that affect all our lives. Board appointments are a great opportunity to give something back to the community, whilst developing your own skills. We wish to appeal to people from as wide a range of backgrounds and experiences as possible to help maximise the relevance of CITB NI to all our citizens. The Board currently consists of a Chair and 12 Members (6 male and 6 females in total).
4. These appointments are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, Northern Ireland (CPANI) and the competition may be examined by CPANI for compliance with the Commissioner’s Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies.

SECTION TWO

Role Profile

Role of Construction Industry Training Board Northern Ireland

5. The CITB NI Board is to support and guide the Chief Executive in the strategic management of CITB NI. The Board has responsibility for ensuring that CITB NI fulfils the aims and objectives set by the Department and approved by the Minister and for promoting the efficient, economic and effective use of staff and other resources.
6. A main decision of the Board will be to propose to the Department for the Economy the industry annual levy rate in preparation for making the Levy Order. The role of a Board Member in co-operation with the other Board Members, is to:
 - consider and approve the strategic and business plans and performance targets contained in them, before submission to the Department for the Economy;
 - monitor and advise on performance against objectives and targets, taking proper account of guidance issued by the Minister, Department for the Economy and Department of Finance;
 - ensure that the Department for the Economy is kept informed of any changes which are likely to impact on the strategic direction of CITB NI or on the attainability of its targets, and determine the steps needed to deal with such changes;
 - ensure that any statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds are complied with; that the Board operates within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority agreed with the Department for the Economy and in accordance with any other conditions relating to the use of public funds; and that, in reaching decisions, the Board takes into account all relevant guidance issued by the Department for the Economy and Department of Finance;
 - ensure that the Board receives and reviews regular financial information concerning the management of CITB NI; is informed in a timely manner about any concerns about the activities of CITB NI; and provides positive assurance to the Department for the Economy that appropriate action has been taken on such concerns: and

- demonstrate high standards of corporate governance at all times, including using the independent audit committee, to help the Board to address the key financial and other risks facing CITB NI.

The Board

7. In accordance with Schedule 2 of the 1984 Order the Board shall be appointed by the Minister for the Economy and shall consist of:
 - (a) a chairman, who shall have industrial, commercial or educational experience;
 - (b) an equal number of persons representative respectively of employers and employees engaging in the industry; and
 - (c) one or more person's representing education.
8. Under the definitions of the 1984 Order 'the industry' means the activities in relation to which the CITB NI exercises its functions, i.e. the construction industry and those parts only that are deemed by the Board to be in scope, i.e. companies who either pay levy to, or are entitled to a training grant from, CITB NI. In addition, the definitions for industry include 'commerce' but exclude the public sector.

Code of Conduct

9. To ensure that public service values remain at the heart of CITB NI you will subscribe to the Code of Conduct for Board Members. The high standards of corporate and personal conduct required of CITB NI Board Members are set out in this document.

Time Commitment and Remuneration

10. The Board normally meets six times a year. As members you will be expected to participate in sub-committees and attend events and therefore the estimated total time commitment is approximately 15 days annually. By applying for this post, it is assumed that you can meet the time commitment however, if short-listed, the issue will be discussed in more detail at interview.

The current remuneration is:

Under 4 hours per day - £92.29

Over 4 hours per day - £180.00

(Please note paragraphs 13 & 14 re public sector employees)

11. Following appointment, travel and subsistence expenses are payable at Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) rates. All reasonable receipted dependant carer expenses will also be reimbursed where applicable. All remuneration and expenses are subject to deduction of income tax and national insurance.
12. Meetings are usually held at the CITB NI, Nutts Corner Training Centre, Crumlin, BT29 4SR during business hours.

Double Paying

13. Applicants who already work in the public sector need to be aware that if appointed, they will be asked to obtain confirmation from their employer that any remuneration due and time worked for this position are truly additional to their existing job role and not a duplication with salaried employment (unless allowed under the terms and condition of employment).
14. In the interests of minimising the potential for double paying to occur the Department reserves the right to contact your employer regarding your candidature.

Nationality

15. DfE have no public appointments which are restricted to UK nationals only. However, there is a mandatory requirement to ensure that those appointed do not contravene immigration legislation.
 - Republic of Ireland (RoI) citizens may be appointed to any post.
 - Commonwealth citizens who have immigration status allowing them to work in the UK may be appointed to any post.
 - There is an onus on non-UK and non-RoI citizens to provide proof of their right to work in the UK and an onus on the appointer to check that.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of the individual to provide evidence that they have the appropriate permission if being offered a post. The Department will check the individual's passport, share code or other documents to confirm if they can legally work in the UK.

Qualifications

16. No specific academic qualifications are required for these appointments.

Training

17. Induction training (and corporate governance training where necessary) will be provided to all new appointees. All Board members are supported with additional development needs or training as necessary.

Person Specification

18. The person specification addresses the qualities, experience, background and competence sought. A criteria-based selection procedure is employed by the Department. This process requires applicants to provide evidence which demonstrates that they can meet the requirements. The mere mention of a skill or attribute is insufficient. Neither can the selection panel make assumptions from the title of a post or the nature of an organisation as to the experience, qualities and skills gained. **For that reason, CVs will not be accepted.**
19. You are encouraged to include salient facts from your employment, voluntary and personal history in addressing specific criteria. Make sure you take full advantage to provide practical evidence and examples of how you feel you are suitable for this appointment. **It is strongly recommended that you read the enclosed booklet entitled 'Public Appointments Guide' which contains guidance on the completion of criteria-based application forms.**
20. The Department will recognise less traditional career paths and experiences such as community involvement or voluntary work, as well as those experiences found within the employment field. Therefore, in your application form, you may use examples from your working or personal life e.g. part-time activities or leisure activities, including any voluntary or community work you are or have been involved in.

Eligibility

21. Applicants will be required to provide details as to how they feel they meet the eligibility criterion at the start of their application form. **Applicants may only apply under one category.** The eligibility criterion will be assessed on a met/not met basis. This will determine whether or not your application will progress in the competition, therefore care should be taken when completing and as much evidence as possible given.

An employee member will be defined as an individual who works at an influential level within a construction company or a Trade Union or is a staff association representative within (or works closely with)

construction companies whose activities are wholly or mainly construction industry activities. Employee members would not be considered to include individuals who are directors, sole traders, Chief Executives or principals. An employee must also have the support of their employer to take on this role.

If applying for the employer position, the organisation MUST be “in scope”*

An employer member will be defined as an individual who is a corporate officer and the embodiment of the organisation when acting in its business. They will be working at a senior level providing strategic direction and management for an organisation which employs staff, such as a construction company or trade employer organisation whose activities are wholly or mainly construction industry activities.

***“In scope”** - Under the definitions of the 1984 Order ‘the industry’ means the activities in relation to which the CITB NI exercises its functions, that is, the construction industry and those parts that are deemed by the Board to be “in scope.”

An “in-scope” employer/company is a contractor or sub-contractor, within the construction industry (excluding plumbing and electrical contractors) who either pays levy to CITB NI or is entitled to claim training grants from CITB NI. In addition, the definition for industry includes ‘commerce’ but excludes the public sector.

Individuals who are subsequently appointed to the Board are expected to be engaged with the Construction Industry for the duration of their term(s) of office.

Selection Criteria

22. Applicants are expected to demonstrate their ability, by way of practical examples, as to how they meet four criteria - **A**, **B** and a choice between **C** and **D**. The criteria are all of equal weight. If more than one criterion is completed between C and D, the panel will only see C.

Selection Criteria	
Mandatory criteria	
A	Setting the Direction - We are looking for an example (or examples) which demonstrates your ability to create a compelling vision, set goals, implement an action plan and measure progress towards your vision.
B	Effective Communication and Collaboration - We are looking for an example (or examples) which demonstrates your ability to effectively exchange information and work jointly with others to achieve results.
Choose any 1 from the following 2 options	
C	Good Governance - We are looking for an example (or examples) which demonstrates your ability to enforce good governance and ensure proper accountability of an organisation.
D	Effective Decision-Making - We are looking for an example (or examples) which demonstrates your ability to research and use information to evaluate options in order to resolve a problem.

Examples of the type of evidence the selection panel will be looking for are listed below each criterion. You do not need to describe activities which meet each and every one of these bullet points.

A Setting the Direction

We are looking for an example (or examples) which demonstrates your ability to create a compelling vision, set goals, implement an action plan and measure progress towards your vision.

Examples of evidence the panel will be looking for are:

- *creating and engaging others in delivering a shared vision;*
- *anticipating future consequences and trends accurately;*
- *anticipating potential pitfalls and planning approach accordingly;*
- *having broad knowledge and perspective and sensitivity to wider political and organisational issues;*
- *setting a clear direction, goals and objectives; and*
- *delivering measurable results and achieving outcomes.*

B Effective Communication and Collaboration

We are looking for an example (or examples) which demonstrates your ability to collaborate and forge effective partnerships to deliver successful outcomes.

Examples of evidence the panel will be looking for are:

- *actively listening to others and take differing perspectives into account;*
- *communicating clearly and effectively, both verbally and in writing;*
- *promoting inclusivity and encourage contributions from a diverse range of people;*
- *managing and resolving conflict in a constructive manner;*
- *fostering teamwork and positive working relationships; and*
- *working collaboratively to achieve results.*

Choose either C or D

C Good Governance

We are looking for an example (or examples) which demonstrates your ability to enforce good governance and ensure proper accountability of an organisation.

Examples of evidence the panel will be looking for are:

- *understanding your role;*
- *ensuring delivery of organisational purpose;*
- *identifying, evaluating and managing risks which may have an adverse impact on an organisation's performance;*
- *monitoring and analysing performance;*
- *behaving with integrity; and*
- *being open, objective and accountable.*

D Effective Decision-Making

We are looking for an example (or examples) which demonstrates your ability to research and use information to evaluate options in order to resolve a problem.

Examples of evidence the panel will be looking for are:

- *developing and implementing solutions having considered a variety of alternatives and options;*
- *comparing the risks and benefits of options and their impact;*
- *seeking feedback and gaining insight from mistakes;*
- *making good decisions based upon a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience and judgement;*
- *using rigorous logic and methods to solve difficult problems;*
- *probing all relevant sources for answers; and*

- *being able to see hidden problems.*

The criteria are all of equal weight. Only those candidates who have provided evidence of sufficient quality to meet the eligibility criterion will be considered for interview.

Integrity & Conflicts of Interest

23. The Department will ensure that the individuals appointed are committed to the principles and values of public service. These principles are **Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.**

24. The Department will take account of actual, or perceived, conflicts of interest. Therefore, in your application form, you must disclose information or personal connections, which, if you were to be appointed, could lead to a conflict of interest or be perceived as such. Conflicts of interest may not be a barrier to appointment but both real and perceived conflicts must be discussed with all candidates by the Interview Panel. This is to ensure that the public can have confidence in the Board's independence and impartiality and the integrity of the potential appointees. Please refer to the attached Annex A for further information on this subject.

Disqualification including Statutory Disqualification

25. (i) individuals who are disqualified under the Company Directors Disqualification Act, who are bankrupt or who are the subject of a Bankruptcy Restrictions Order are not eligible to apply.
- (ii) for the Department's consideration, applicants are asked to declare in the application form if they have been convicted of any offences (other than minor motoring offences) which are not spent in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI Order 1928) or if any charges are outstanding.
- (iii) anyone under the age of 18 years on the due date of commencement of Board membership.
- (iv) anyone who has, within five years of the due date that their appointment would take effect, been convicted in a court in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Irish

Republic of any offence and has passed on them a sentences of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than three months without the option of a fine.

- (v) anyone who has defaulted payment of levy to the CITB NI.
- (vi) employees and employers within organisations not engaged wholly or mainly in construction industry activities. Under the definitions of the 1984 Order 'the industry' means the activities in relation to which the CITB NI exercises its functions, i.e. the construction industry and those parts only that are deemed by the Board to be "in scope", i.e. companies who either pay levy to, or are entitled to training grant from, CITB NI. In addition, the definitions for industry include 'commerce' but exclude the public sector". Applicants should also refer to page 9, section 22 which defines an employee, employer and educationalist member.
- (vii) anyone who has been removed from the Board.

26. There are no statutory disqualifications relating to these appointments.

27. Individuals who have served two terms as a CITB NI Board Member are not eligible to apply for the same position; the terms do not need to be consecutive.

Applications from Civil Servants/former Civil Servants

28. It is possible that conflicts of interest could arise in relation to government policy, strategy or the fair administration of public services and justice during the course of NICS business. Civil servants, or former civil servants, are welcome to apply for the post of Member. However, they should be aware that a judgement will be made by the interviewing panel, taking account of the Cabinet Office guidance on Making and Managing Public Appointments, as to whether the nature of his/her employment could lead to a perceived or real split of loyalties of a sufficiently serious nature to render appointment as Member an unmanageable conflict of interest. A copy of this guidance is available at: [Governance Code on Public Appointments - GOV.UK](#)

29. Former Civil Servants are subject to rules on the acceptance of outside business appointments, employment, or self-employment for a period of up to two years after leaving the NI Civil Service. Individuals in this category, who wish to apply, should check their eligibility to do so with

NICSHR Employee Relations. You can contact HRConnect as follows:
Email: NICS@HRConnect.nigov.net or External Dial: **0800 1 300 400**

30. Candidates who are current employees of the Northern Ireland Civil Service are advised that, should you be offered an appointment, you will be asked to confirm that you have obtained the necessary approval to undertake private work with another public sector body (including another Government Department) from NICSHR Employee Relations. Further information on this can be found in the **NICS HR Handbook, Section 6.01: Standards of Conduct, Sub Section 6: Private Occupations.**

31. **Current and Former Civil Servants are advised to seek the required authorisation at the start of their application process.**

SECTION THREE

Application Form

32. The application form is designed to ensure applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements. You will be assessed against the criteria detailed in paragraph 22. You can use examples from your working life, including any voluntary or community work you are, or have been, engaged in or, if preferred, you can use examples from your personal life. To ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants:

- a. CVs, letters, or any other supplementary material in place of, or in addition to, completed application forms will not be accepted;
- b. applicants should complete hard copy application forms in a legible format (e.g. font size 12) or legible block capitals using black ink;
- c. applicants should not use more than **400 words** per criterion. Any information over and above the word count will be redacted by the administration team and not seen by the selection panel; and
- d. applications will not be examined until after the closing deadline.

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 [Public Appointments - Artificial intelligence and recruitment](#) and recruitment for more information on appropriate and inappropriate use.

33. Braille, large print, and audio formats are available on request.

34. You can complete an online application using the following link:
<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/dfc/citbni-members-application>

35. Alternatively, you can request a hardcopy pack from the DfE Public Appointments Unit at: pau@economy-ni.gov.uk or by telephoning Yvonne Green on 028 9052 9282 TextRelay: 18001 028 9052 9282.

36. Written applications should be posted to:-

Department for the Economy
Public Appointments Unit
Adelaide House
39-49 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8FD

37. **The closing date for the receipt of all applications is 12:00 Noon (BST) on Friday 5 June 2026.** Applications will be receipted, and the time of receipt formally recorded. Applications may also be emailed to pau@economy-ni.gov.uk. Electronic signatures are acceptable. If it is not possible to submit an application electronically, hard copy applications will be accepted. All applications will be date-stamped and the time of receipt formally recorded.

38. It is the responsibility of the applicant, taking into account their chosen method of delivery, to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for their application to arrive with the Department on or before the deadline. **Late applications will not be accepted.** Please ensure that posted applications bear the correct amount of postage as any shortfall may lead to a delay in delivery, causing you to miss the deadline.

Data Protection

39. As much of the information involved in the appointment process will be of a personal nature, the provisions of Data Protection legislation will be followed. To ensure that you are aware of how and why your personal information is to be used, and with whom it may be shared, a DfE Public Appointments 'privacy notice' is available on the following link for your information and reference:

[Privacy Notice - Public Appointments | Department for the Economy \(economy-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/privacy-notice-public-appointments)

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

40. The Department is required to monitor the gender, ethnic origin, community background and disability of applicants to ensure that equal opportunities measures are effective. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines a person with a disability as someone who has, or has had in the past, a physical or mental impairment which has had a substantial long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. This includes sensory impairments, people who have had a

disability in the past even though they are no longer disabled, people whose disability is likely to last for twelve months or rest of their life, and people whose condition is likely to progress or recur. Severe disfigurement is also acknowledged as a disability.

41. You are therefore asked to complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Information section of the application form. The information is not made available to the panel members and does not play a role in the decision-making process. It will be detached from your application form by the Administration Team and sent to the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency for analysis and will be treated in strict confidence.
42. It would be preferable if completed monitoring forms could be submitted in the same method as your application form.

Enquiries and Feedback

43. Enquiries and feedback can be directed to the above addresses or alternatively via telephone or text relay as follows: Tel: 028 9052 9282 (Yvonne Green), TextRelay: 18001 028 9052 9282
 - Information on the expectations of the role or if you require any clarification on a particular aspect of the role or the criteria being assessed. Email: carol.johnston@economy-ni.gov.uk

Sift and Shortlisting Process

44. An anonymised sift and short-listing process will be employed. When assessing each application against the selection criteria, panel members will use a **Marking Frame of 1-5, pass-mark 3** to determine how an applicant's skills, knowledge and experience meet each of the criteria. Applications which clearly do not meet the essential criteria will be sifted out. The eligibility criterion will be assessed on a met/not met basis.
45. All applicants who scored at least a **3** in each criterion i.e. minimum overall score of **9**, will be considered eligible for interview.
46. The Selection Panel reserves the right to apply a scoring system to further short-list for interview, based on the quality of evidence provided using aggregated marks. GIS applicants eligible for interview will automatically be offered an interview.
47. If shortlisting is required, the Selection Panel has agreed that the initial pass mark to be invited for interview will be an overall score of **12** out of a possible score of **15**. Candidates must also have achieved the agreed

pass mark of **3** or above out of the available **5** marks in all three criteria to be considered eligible for interview.

48. Should there be an insufficient pool of candidates achieving the required score of **12** the Selection Panel may consider reducing the required aggregated pass mark by one mark each time until a sufficient pool of candidates eligible for interview is in place.
49. All those sifted out or not short-listed will be provided with feedback on request based on the agreed Panel's assessment of their application. If an applicant wishes to contest the decision of the Panel, they should do so within five working days of receipt of their feedback letter. Further details about the process will be provided in the feedback letter.

Time Frame for Process

50. Your application will be acknowledged immediately after submission if applying online, or within 2 working days if applying via an email or hardcopy application form. If you have not received an acknowledgement within this timescale please contact the DfE Public Appointments Unit by phone to Yvonne Green on 028 9052 9282.

Interviews

51. Interviews will last approximately **30** minutes and will be competency based, on criteria A, B and your chosen criteria from C or D (detailed in paragraph 22).
52. Candidates will also be required to answer questions on the standards of behaviour required of public appointees and any real, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest between their circumstances and the appointment applied for. **See Annex A.**
53. To be deemed suitable for selection, candidates must achieve a pass mark of **9** or above for all three criteria.
54. It is anticipated that interviews will take place on 23, 24 and 30 July 2026. Interviews will take place in DfE Headquarters, Adelaide House, 39-49 Adelaide Street, Belfast BT2 8FD. Those candidates invited to interview are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable travelling expenses incurred within the UK and the ROI. All reasonable receipted dependant carer and/or childcare expenses will also be reimbursed where applicable.

Competence-Based Interviews

55. Competence-based interviewing tests candidates against the specific selection criteria for a particular appointment. The application form gives you an opportunity to provide examples relevant to the specific criteria. These, in turn, provide the interview panel with information and evidence about you, and a deeper understanding of your abilities.
56. The interview is a crucial part of the appointment process and thorough preparation is essential. You can prepare for the interview by:
- reading and thoroughly understanding the selection criteria;
 - reminding yourself of the examples you used in your application form and being prepared to expand on these at interview, if asked;
 - rehearsing how you might relate your experiences to the interview panel, emphasising your own role and responsibilities; and
 - not assuming that your qualities and experience will speak for themselves.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS)

- 57. We are operating a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) in this competition for applicants with a disability. Applicants with a disability who meet all of the criteria at the sift stage will automatically be offered an interview. Their application will not be subjected to any short-listing which may take place.**

Pre-appointment Checks

58. Before the names of suitable candidates are presented to the Minister a Company Director's disqualification check and a bankruptcy check will be carried out. In addition, a cross-departmental check will be carried out on the probity and performance of those candidates who currently hold or have held public appointment roles.

Presentation of Results

59. Ministerial choice is a key element of public appointment policy that enables Minister(s) to indicate if they wish to have the names of candidates suitable for appointment presented in a ranked (strict merit order) or unranked (alphabetical) list. The DfE Minister has made it known that her preference on the presentation of results is an unranked list.

Publicising Appointments

60. A press release will be published to announce the appointment. Upon appointment, a candidate will be required to complete a political activity form and provide a short biography for publication. The press release will include, the candidate's name, a short description of the body to which they have been appointed, a brief summary of the skills and knowledge the candidate brings to the role, the length of the appointment term and details of the candidate's response to the political activity questionnaire.

Complaints Procedure

61. The Public Appointments Unit (PAU) within the DfE is committed to the principles of public appointments as set out in the CPANI Code of Practice. If at any stage you feel you have reason to complain, details of the Department's PAU Complaints Procedure can be found at:

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/public-appointments-unit-complaints-procedure>

Integrity and Conflicts of Interest – Guide for Candidates

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the information contained in the leaflet 'Guidance on Conflict of Interest, Integrity and How to raise a Complaint' produced by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, Northern Ireland, which provides examples of the types of issues that may give rise to conflicts of interests.

1. In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life **defined seven principles**, which should underpin the actions of all who serve the public in any way. These are:

Selflessness: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity: Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity: Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness: Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty: Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership: Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

2. All candidates who put themselves forward for a public appointment must be able to demonstrate their commitment to the principles and values of public service. One of the issues which might arise in relation to this is that of conflict of interest.

What is a conflict of interest?

3. Public Appointments require the highest standards of propriety, involving impartiality, integrity and objectivity, in relation to the stewardship of public funds and the oversight and management of all related activities. This means that any private, voluntary, charitable or political interest which might be material and relevant to the work of the body concerned should be declared. There is always the possibility for real or perceived conflicts of interest to arise. Both are a problem, as the perceived inference of a conflict may, on occasions, be as damaging as the existence of a real conflict.
4. No-one should use, or give the appearance of using, their public position to further their private interests. This is an area of particular importance, as it is of considerable concern to the public and receives a lot of media attention. It is important, therefore, that you consider your circumstances when applying for a public appointment and identify any potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived.

Surely a perceived conflict is not a problem, as long as I act impartially at all times?

5. The integrity of the individual is not in question here. However, it is necessary for the standing of the individual and the Board that members of the public have confidence in their independence and impartiality. Even a perceived conflict of interest on the part of a Board Member can be extremely damaging to the body's reputation and it is therefore essential that these are declared and explored, in the same way as an actual conflict would be. The fact that a member acted impartially may be no defence against accusations of potential bias.

What should I do if I think I have a conflict of interest?

6. You will find a section on conflicts of interest in the application form for you to complete. This asks you to consider and declare whether or not you have a real, or perceived, conflict. If you are unsure if your circumstances constitute a possible conflict, you should still complete this section, in order to give selection panel members as much information as possible.

If I declare a conflict, does this mean I will not be considered for appointment?

7. No - each case is considered individually. If you are short-listed for interview, the panel will explore with you how far the conflict might affect your ability to contribute effectively and impartially on the Board and how this might be handled, if you were to be appointed. For example, it may be possible to arrange for you to step out of meetings where an issue is discussed, in which you have an interest. However, if, following the discussion with you, the panel believes that the conflict is too great and would call into question the probity of the Board or the appointment, they can withdraw your application from the competition.

8. The report on the outcome of the interview process which is put to the Minister will include clear written reference to any perceived or actual conflicts of interest or integrity issues connected to any candidate put forward as suitable for appointment. It will include sufficient information to ensure that the Minister is fully aware of any of these matters and can make an informed decision.

What happens if I do not declare a known conflict, which is then discovered by the Department after my appointment?

9. Again, each case would be considered on its merits, but the Department may take the view that by concealing a conflict of interest, you would be deemed to have breached the Seven Principles of Conduct Underpinning Public Life and may terminate your appointment.

What happens if I do not realise a potential conflict exists?

10. This situation may arise where the candidate is not familiar with the broad range of work which a body covers and therefore does not realise that a conflict might exist. In some cases, the panel, with their wider knowledge of the body, might deduce that there is a potential conflict issue, based on the information on employment and experience provided by the candidate in the application form. They will then explore this at interview with the candidate.

What happens if a conflict of interest arises after an appointment is made?

11. This could arise for two main reasons. The first is that the member's circumstances may change, for example, they may change jobs and in doing so, a conflict with their work on the Board becomes apparent. The second is where a member is unfamiliar with the range of the work of the body, but after appointment, it becomes clear that a conflict exists where none had been envisaged during the appointment process.
12. In both cases, the issue should be discussed with the Chair of the Board and the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Partner Department, to decide whether or not the member can continue to carry out their role in an appropriate manner and each case is considered individually.
13. It may be that the conflict is such that it would be impractical for the member to continue on the Board, if they would have to withdraw from a considerable amount of the body's routine business. In such cases, the member may be asked to stand down from the body.