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*Dear Christine*

**Summer internships**

Further to my discussions last term with Thomas at Jordanstown, you will be pleased to hear that under the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Work Experience Policy the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service has had approved a specific policy on the Appointment of Legal Interns. I attach a copy of the policy, which indicates the terms and conditions and how students may apply. You will see that internships are not remunerated, and that a letter of support and certificate of insurance is required from the student's university. Although unpaid, I hope that an experience with us might be of assistance to your students in today's challenging job market, although I should add that any application they might make to the NICS afterwards for employment will be subject to open competition. If any students are interested in an internship with the Courts and Tribunals Service, they should write to Neill Cruikshanks, HR Unit 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Laganside House, Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service, 23-27 Oxford Street, Belfast BT1 3LA in the first instance, and should indicate the length of internship they are seeking and any particular areas of interest that they may have.

If you would like to draw this to the attention of your student body, please do so. If you would like to discuss any aspect further, please do not hesitate to give me a ring.

Yours sincerely

*Claire*

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## **WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE**

The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) comprises 11 Government Departments, each of which plays a key role in the development and implementation of government policy and delivery of services to the people of Northern Ireland.

It is the aim of the NICS to have a workforce which is broadly representative of the population of Northern Ireland. In order to achieve this aim we recognise that it is important that young people considering careers choices have an opportunity to learn as much as possible about the opportunities that exist in the NICS. Information on jobs in the NICS which are currently advertised is available on [www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk)

The other way of helping young people to make better careers choices is by participation in work experience/work shadowing placements organised by schools, colleges or business/education links bodies. Whilst the majority of jobs in the NICS are of an administrative or management nature, there are a great diversity of other jobs across scientific, technological, professional, legal, medical, engineering and IT related areas. Whilst more detailed information on NICS recruitment grades is provided in our Careers Information Pack, the following are examples of positions employed in each Department. It will not always be possible to provide placements in these areas but the NICS will endeavour to provide placements in response to all requests which are received. Whilst young people undertaking work experience placements in administrative posts will generally have the opportunity to carry out some of the tasks of positions, there will be positions where this will not be possible. In such cases the emphasis will be on work shadowing where the student will be observing the post-holder carrying out the duties of the post in question.

### **Grades recruited corporately by the NICS and successful candidates allocated to one of the 11 Government Departments:**

- Support grades (e.g. Messengers etc)
- Administrative Assistants
- Administrative Officers
- Executive Officers 2
- Staff Officer Degree Holders

**Brief background to each Department and their role in providing work experience placements:**

### **Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister**

The Department supports the First Minister and deputy First Minister and the Executive and leads on a number of key cross cutting policy and strategy issues across the NICS such as equality, poverty, good relations, sustainable development and European policy. The Department will consider work experience opportunities in the following areas:

- All administrative grades
- Communication grades in the Executive Information Service

### **Department of Agriculture and Rural Development**

The Department's vision is that of a thriving and sustainable rural community and environment in Northern Ireland in which the Department aims to strengthen the social and economic infrastructure of rural areas, enhances animal, fish and plant health and welfare, develops a more sustainable environment and delivers effectively its services to customers.

- DARD have a number of offices throughout Northern Ireland as well as Agricultural Colleges and will consider any requests for work experience in office based environments:

### **Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**

The Department aims to achieve for society 'A confident, creative, informed and vibrant community'. It's vision is a society that develops and flourishes, becoming more informed and proud of its cultural identity, a society where we unlock our latent creativity, to become even more vibrant and confident in the future. The Department will consider work experience opportunities in the following areas:

- All administrative grades
- Curator

### **Department of Education**

The Department of Education works together as partners in education and youth services to ensure a high standard of education for all children and young people, which will put them at the centre of education, motivate them, build their confidence and enrich their lives, and promote the foundation for a vibrant economy. The Department will consider work experience opportunities in the following area:

- All administrative grades

### **Department for Employment and Learning**

The role of the Department is to promote learning and skills, to prepare people for work and to support the economy. The Department's objectives are to promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training as well as to help people into employment and promote good employment practices.

- All administrative grades
- Careers Advisor

### **Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment**

The goal of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment is to grow a dynamic innovative economy, with a greater capacity to generate wealth and raise living standards. The key priorities for the Department are to improve productivity of the manufacturing and private sector, raise employment levels and develop the tourism sector. The Department will consider work experience opportunities related to the following areas:

- All administrative grades
- Health and Safety Inspectors
- Trading Standards Officer
- Marine Biologist

### **Department of the Environment**

The aim of the Department of Environment is to contribute to a better and safer environment which will support a vibrant and dynamic economy and to support the delivery of a system of strong and effective local government. The Department will consider work experience opportunities in the following areas:

- Planning Service - Headquarters Belfast, Ballymena, Belfast, Craigavon, Downpatrick, Londonderry, Coleraine, Omagh, Enniskillen (Planners)
- Press Office
- Driver Vehicle Agency (DVA) - Testing (Vehicle Examiners), IT Section
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
- Corporate Services - Finance Unit (Accountants)
- Environmental Protection - Industrial Pollution & Radiochemical Inspectorate, Water Management Unit (Scientists)
- Natural Heritage - Conservation Designations & Protection, Countryside and Coast, Regional Operations (Bellaghy Bawn, Castlearchdale Country Park, Coastal Zone Centre (Portrush), Peatlands Park) (Rangers)

### **Department of Finance and Personnel**

The Department of Finance and Personnel and its Agencies are responsible for a wide variety of functions, many of which are carried out centrally on behalf of the Northern Ireland Civil Service as a whole. These include Central Finance Group, Corporate Human Resources, Departmental Solicitors' Office, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, Central Procurement Directorate, Corporate Services Group; and Land and Property Services. The Department will consider work experience placements in the following areas:

- All administrative grades
- Assistant Statistician
- Accountants (on behalf of all NICS Departments)
- IT Professionals
- Valuers
- Mapping and Charting grades
- Legal grades
- Assistant Economists
- Construction disciplines
- Procurement professionals
- Internal Audit

### **Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety**

The Department's mission is to improve the health and social well being of the people of Northern Ireland. It endeavours to do so by supporting programmes of health promotion and education to encourage the community to adopt activities, behaviours and attitudes which will lead to better health and well-being and by ensuring the provision of appropriate health and social services. It aims to do this both in clinical settings, such as hospitals and GP's surgeries, and in the community, through nursing, social work and other professional services.

- DHSSPS have a range of health and social care related policy areas and will consider requests for work experience placements in suitable areas of the Department.

### **Department for Regional Development**

The Department aims to improve the quality of life for everyone in Northern Ireland by securing transport and water infrastructure and shaping the regions' long-term strategic development. The Department will consider work experience placements in the following areas:

- All administrative grades
- Graduate trainee civil engineer
- PTO/HPTO Graphic Designer
- PTO Civil Engineering Assistants
- PTO Electrical Engineers

- PTO Mechanical Fleet
- TGI/TG2 (Technical Grades)

### **Department for Social Development**

In December 1999 the Department for Social Development (DSD) was established as part of the Northern Ireland Executive. It's overall aim is to tackle disadvantage and promote individual and community well-being of the people of Northern Ireland through integrated social and economic action. It has strategic responsibility for urban regeneration, community and voluntary sector development, social legislation, housing, social security benefits, pensions and child support.

Around 8,000 people are employed by DSD, with the majority of staff working in the Social Security Agency and Child Maintenance and Enforcement Division. While the majority of staff are located in Belfast, the Department also has offices throughout Northern Ireland.

DSD Human Resources arrange placements for Work Experience Placements, Internships and Programme-Led Apprenticeships. The list below provides examples of the range of different types of work where student placements may be facilitated:

- (i) Benefit/Pension Offices:
  - Jobs and Benefits
  - Social Fund Unit
  - Employment & Support Allowance
  - Incapacity Benefit
  - Disability and Carers Service
  - Pensions Branch
- (ii) Child Maintenance & Enforcement Division
- (iii) Belfast Regeneration Office
- (iv) The Appeals Tribunal Service
- (v) Human Resources Directorate
- (vi) Learning and Development Unit
- (vii) Voluntary & Community Unit
- (viii) Northern Ireland Housing Executive

## **Types of work placements which may be facilitated**

- (a) Work experience placements of young people who are in years 11/12 or 13/14 of full time education;
- (b) Internships arranged through Colleges or University
- (c) Work Experience placements arranged through an initiative managed by the Department of Employment and Learning e.g.
  - a. Programme led apprenticeships
  - b. Steps to Work
- (d) Sandwich year or sandwich period placements publicly advertised by Departments

## **Work Experience placements of young people who are in years 11/12 or 13/14 of full time education**

All requests for work experience placements must come from the school or college at which the young person is registered. The NICS will not be able to consider any request unless it is accompanied by a copy of the insurance indemnity provided by either the school or the Education and Library Board with responsibility for the school. Students under 18 years of age who participate in short work experience placements will not require formal vetting but those NICS branches which provide the placements will be required to ensure that access to confidential databases/information is strictly supervised. Students on short work placements will not have a login facility to NICS databases. A short application form must also be completed (see application link) and forwarded to Appointments and Marketing Branch, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Orchard House, 40 Foyle Street, Londonderry, BT48 6AT.

Appointments and Marketing Branch will copy all requests to the relevant Department/s which will liaise directly with the school/college making the request.

The normal duration for work experience placements is one week.

## **Internships arranged through University**

An internship is a period of work experience arranged by a university in which the intern will be placed in a government Department. The period of the placement is likely to mirror a university semester and the placement will be in a Department which is providing a function directly related to the nature of the degree course being provided by the university and being undertaken by the student. It is essential that the university provides insurance indemnity for interns undertaking placements. Students undertaking NICS internships will require formal vetting by AccessNI.

## **Programme led Apprenticeships**

This is a two year programme led by the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) and which involves work placements of one day a week in a NICS Department. The placements are arranged by training suppliers approved by DEL and which requires the training supplier to have adequate

insurance which will indemnify their apprentices placed within the Public Sector. Students undertaking NICS programme led apprenticeships will require formal vetting by AccessNI.

### **Sandwich year placements**

Some Departments provide one year sandwich placements for students undertaking degree courses which are vocational based. These placements are publicly advertised and the successful students become paid employees for the period of their placements. Students employed as NICS sandwich year students will require formal vetting by AccessNI.

### **13 week student placements**

Some Departments e.g. DRD provide 13 week student placement opportunities for students as part of their degree course – similar to sandwich year placements, only shorter.