



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

www.health-ni.gov.uk

Public Appointments Information Booklet

**PHARMACUETICAL SOCIETY
OF NORTHERN IRELAND
(PSNI 1/26)**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS
(3 X REGISTRANT)**

Information booklet and application forms can be provided in alternative formats, such as, Braille, large print, audio, etc. and applicants who require assistance will be facilitated on request, provided this is made prior to 12 March 2026.

DoH Public Appointments Unit
Room 16, Annex 1
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SQ

Tel: 02890 528355 or 02890 765789 (Monday – Friday between 9.00am and 5.00 pm)

E-mail your request to: public.appointments@health-ni.gov.uk

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KEY APPOINTMENT PROCESS STAGES

Stage in Process	Timescale*
Closing Date for applications	12 noon GMT 26 March 2026
Sift/Shortlisting	3 April 2026
Interviews	11 & 12 May 2026
Date of appointments	June/July 2026

*These dates may be subject to change

Privacy Notice

DoH will only process the personal data you provide us for the purpose of recruiting Council Members to the Pharmaceutical Society Northern Ireland (PSNI). For more information, please see our Privacy Notice at <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/public-appointments-unit-privacy-notice>

APPOINTMENT OF REGISTRANT COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR THE PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY OF NORTHERN IRELAND

Dear Applicant,

As President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland, I am delighted to launch our Council recruitment campaign. My sincere thanks for your interest in applying to join our Council as a Registrant Member.

Our current vacancies are a unique opportunity for you to help shape policies, improve services, and enhance healthcare delivery, making a positive difference to the lives of people in Northern Ireland.

As a Member of the Council, we will also provide you with an opportunity for your own personal growth and development. You will gain valuable experience in governance processes, legal frameworks, and regulatory compliance. Exposure to complex healthcare issues and collaboration with other professionals will enhance your skills and broaden your perspective, which is invaluable for anyone interested in healthcare or leadership roles.

If you are successful, you will undergo a formal induction process, and you will have the opportunity to attend Council development sessions throughout your tenure, providing you with ongoing training, professional development and enhancement of your skillset. You will also benefit from a mentor, who will be assigned to you as part of your first year on Council.

Serving on the Council will introduce you to a diverse and exciting network of professionals, including fellow Council Members, staff, healthcare professionals, civil servants, academics and policymakers, broadening your knowledge, expertise and professional network.

We welcome applications for the Registrant position from all sectors of Pharmacy, including Community Pharmacy, Hospital, General Practice, Academic and other.

This is a very exciting time to join the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland, now in its 101st year, with a number of major changes across the pharmacy sector and professional regulation, including the development of strategies to support Pharmacist Prescribers, enhanced governance arrangements for Chief Pharmacists and working with the new Code of Conduct, Ethics and Performance for Pharmacists. The Society recently launched its Corporate Strategy for 2025-26 and we look forward to embarking on a new chapter in the development and transformation journey of the Society.

I look forward to receiving your application to be part of the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland going forward, and I wish you the best of luck in your application.

Dr Geraldine O'Hare
President
Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland

Section 1 – Introduction

- 1.1 The Department of Health (hereafter referred to as ‘the Department’) is committed to the principle of public appointments based on merit with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process. The Department is also committed to equality of opportunity for all and welcomes applications irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, ethnic group, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation or whether or not they have dependants. For this competition, the Department would particularly welcome applications from women, who are currently under-represented on the Pharmaceutical Society Northern Ireland (PSNI) Council. Applications are also welcome from young people, people with disabilities and people from ethnic minority communities who are currently under-represented in non-executive roles across HSC Boards. Applications from those who have not previously held a public appointment are also encouraged to apply.
- 1.2 The Department administers Health and Social Care (HSC) - which includes policy and legislation for hospitals, family practitioner services, community health and personal social services. HSC provides an integrated system of health and personal social services to promote the health and social wellbeing of the people of Northern Ireland.
- 1.3 In terms of service commissioning and provision, the Department discharges this duty primarily through its Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) and by delegating the exercise of its statutory functions to the Public Health Agency (PHA) and to a number of other HSC bodies created to exercise specific functions on its behalf. All these HSC bodies are accountable to the Department which in turn is accountable, through the Minister of Health, to the Assembly for the manner in which this duty is performed.
- 1.4 A new framework for planning and managing health and social care services in Northern Ireland, the Integrated Care System for NI (ICS NI), is being implemented. ICS NI is underpinned by a population health approach, with the objective of improving health and wellbeing outcomes and the reduction of health

inequalities through collaboration and partnership in the design, delivery and management of health, social and community services. The strategic direction to the system will be set through a Strategic Outcomes Framework conveying the identified health and wellbeing needs of the population, as well as the Ministerial departmental priorities.

1.5 Applications are invited to fill the following positions:

- 3 x Registrant Members

Applications for the Registrant position are welcome from all sectors of Pharmacy including Community Pharmacy, Hospital, General Practice, Academic and other.

The positions are based at 73 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1HL with an expectation of attendance in person for Council, Committee and other meetings. A hybrid approach to meetings remains an option.

1.6 It is expected that the successful applicants will take up appointment no later than June/July 2026.

1.7 Information on disqualifications can be accessed at **Annex A**.

1.8 The PSNI is not a public body that is regulated under the Commissioner for Public Appointments (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (as amended). The appointment process will, however, be run in the spirit, principles and practice of the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland [Code of Practice for Ministerial Public Appointments in Northern Ireland](#), except in relation to the handling of complaints from applicants.

Section 2 – Background Information on the PSNI

- 2.1 The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland was established by the Pharmacy and Poisons Act (Northern Ireland) 1925, and has been based at 73 University Street, Belfast since 1933. It is an independent body, established as a body corporate. It is the regulatory and professional body for pharmacists in Northern Ireland. It maintains a register of over 2800 pharmacists, 140 pre-registration trainees and over 550 pharmacy premises across the country.
- 2.2 As the regulatory body it protects patients and public safety by:
- Setting and promoting standards for pharmacists' admission to the register and for remaining on the register;
 - Maintaining a publicly accessible register of pharmacists and pharmacy premises;
 - Handling concerns about the Fitness to Practise of Registrants, acting as a complaints portal and taking action to protect the public; and
 - Ensuring high standards of education and training for pharmacists in Northern Ireland.
- 2.3 Additional powers and responsibilities were conferred on the organisation by the Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976. Following publication in 2007 of the Government's white paper "Trust Assurance and Safety", further amendments were required to modernise the regulation of pharmacy in Northern Ireland. These amendments were made in 2012 under the [Pharmacy \(1976 Order\) \(Amendment\) Order \(Northern Ireland\) 2012 \(the Amendment Order\)](#).
- 2.4 The Amendment Order and subsequent regulations modernised the structures and activities of the organisation, creating an appointed Council of seven Lay Members and seven Registrant Members, a Scrutiny Committee and a re-structured Statutory Committee. The Scrutiny Committee and the Statutory Committee have been given extended powers, widening the range of sanctions available to them, including the power to issue interim orders.
- 2.5 An additional power granted to the organisation under the Amendment Order is the power to make Continuing Professional Development a mandatory

requirement for continuing registration. Details of the legislation applicable to pharmacy in Northern Ireland can be found at:

<http://www.psni.org.uk/publications/pharmacy-related-legislation/>

Role of PSNI Council

- 2.6 The Council is the governing body of the organisation and comprises fourteen Non-Executive Members, (one of whom is appointed by the Department of Health (NI) as President (Chair)). It focuses on strategic and major policy issues with operational issues delegated to the Chief Executive through a scheme of delegation. All individual Council Members share collective responsibility for discharging the organisation's functions.
- 2.7 By virtue of its integrated regulatory and professional roles, the Council performs functions of a public nature and is therefore accountable to its membership for the delivery of Professional Leadership (through an elected Pharmacy Forum Management Board) and directly to the public and NI Assembly for regulation.
- 2.8 The objectives, as set out in the 1976 Order, are:
- To advance chemistry and pharmacy;
 - To promote pharmaceutical education and the application of pharmaceutical knowledge;
 - To maintain the honour and safeguard and promote the interest of the Members of the Society and in their exercise of the profession of pharmacy;
 - To execute all such functions as may be entrusted to the Society under any enactment; and
 - To provide relief to distressed persons, being:
 - (i) Members of the Society;
 - (ii) persons who at any time have been Members of the Society or have been registered as either pharmaceutical chemists, or chemists and druggists, or druggists or apprentices to pharmaceutical chemists, or as students of the Society; or
 - (iii) widows, orphans or dependents of deceased persons who were at any time Members of the Society or registered as aforesaid.

Section 3 – Council Member Role Profile

Accountable to

3.1 The Pharmaceutical Society NI as an independent Statutory Body, is accountable directly to the NI Assembly and held to account for its operational performance by the Professional Standards Authority.

Role of Members

3.2 Council Members share collective responsibility for discharging the organisation's functions and will be expected to:

- Lead strategic development and policy;
- Ensure the proper exercise of regulatory and law enforcement duties;
- Set priorities for workload, expenditure and income generation;
- Monitor the implementation of policies, activities of committees, efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation, and policy evaluation;
- Act as a trustee, or appoint Trustees of charitable trusts/funds;
- Maintain good relationships with Members, the public and other professions;
- Ensure, via the Pharmacy Forum, that the profession's policies and views are represented to government departments and decision makers;
- Decide upon the supporting structures required by Council, and the extent to which responsibility should be delegated to them where permitted;
- Ensure adequate systems of appointment, appraisal, remuneration and discipline of staff exist; and
- Ensure high standards of corporate governance, including financial performance and personal behaviour, and contribute to holding the executive team to account.

3.3 Members are expected to adhere to the seven principles as defined by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (Nolan Principles). These are: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.

Training

- 3.4 Appropriate induction training will be provided by the organisation to the new appointee.

Time Commitment & Remuneration

- 3.5 The Council schedules at least 6 meetings per year. Council Members will also be asked to Chair or serve on at least one of 3 Standing committees which also meet up to 6 times per year. In addition, Members may be required to attend other occasional meetings/workshops/Council development sessions/training and also participate in Short Life Working Groups in order to conduct the business of Council appropriately. Most meetings are normally limited to a maximum of 4 hours duration. Members should expect to commit to a minimum of 12 days per annum, with some meetings and events held in the evenings. A hybrid approach to Council meetings remains an option
- 3.6 The Council Members are remunerated by an attendance fee. Attendance at meetings up to 4 hours duration attracts a fee of £120 and for meetings over 4 hours £240. Training and induction days attract a fee of £120.

Expenses

- 3.7 Council Members are also eligible to claim allowances, at rates set centrally, for travel and subsistence costs necessarily incurred on PSNI business.

Period of Appointment

- 3.8 A Council Member will be appointed for a period not exceeding 4 years.
- 3.9 It should be noted that the Department may give notice to terminate the appointment at any time. If the successful applicant decides to end their appointment early, a minimum of 30 days' notice will be required in writing to the Department.
- 3.10 An annual assessment of the performance of a Council Member will be required throughout the period of appointment and will be conducted by the President.

3.11 The Department is committed to improving the diversity of the governing bodies to which it makes appointments. In view of this, it is the Department's policy to not automatically re-appoint to the Council for a second term unless there are essential business reasons, such as maintaining business continuity. However, a sitting Member may re-apply through open public competition and may be considered to serve a second term subject to: the outcome of the competition recruitment process, evidence of an appropriate standard of performance having been achieved during the initial period in office and evidence of the continued adherence to the seven principles of public life. No person may serve as a Member of Council for more than 8 years in any period of 20 years.

Codes of Conduct and Accountability

3.12 Council Members will be required, on appointment, to subscribe to the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland Code of Conduct for Council Members, to be found at : [PSNI Corporate Governance Handbook](#)

3.13 The PSNI is held to account for its operational performance by the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) for Health and Social Care and is accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly. The PSA is responsible for overseeing ten of the UK's health and care professional regulatory bodies. Their oversight and scrutiny of the health regulators and publication of results of performance reviews and audits is important for protecting patients and the public and for maintaining confidence in regulation.

Section 4 – Person Specification Council Member

- 4.1 The Department encourages all eligible individuals who wish to participate in public service and make a difference to the way in which health and social care services are delivered in Northern Ireland to submit an application form.
- 4.2 The person specification addresses the qualities, experience, background and competencies sought. Criteria-based selection will be used as part of this process (**Annex B**).

CPANI run free workshops aimed at explaining the nature of the public appointment process and how best to complete an application. If you would be interested in attending, details can be found [here](#).

- 4.3 The application form is an essential element of the process and is designed to require applicants to give specific examples of past performance to demonstrate their ability or competence.
- 4.4 You are advised to make sure that you take the opportunity to provide practical evidence and examples of why you believe you are suitable for this Public Appointment. **Please note that CVs will not be accepted.**
- 4.5 The specific eligibility requirements for the PSNI Council Members positions being recruited in this competition are as follows.

Registrant Member: Applicants applying as a Registered Member must demonstrate that they are registered as a pharmaceutical chemist or druggist or are eligible to register and commit to doing so if appointed.

Further information on PSNI registration and eligibility to register is available at: <https://www.psni.org.uk/registration/pharmacist-registration/>

Registrant Members will also be asked for their Registration Number.

4.6 All applicants must demonstrate that they have the necessary skills, knowledge, experience and qualities required. They will need to show, both on the application form and at interview, how they meet the relevant essential criteria.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

- 4.7 All applicants must show on their application form, and if invited for interview, how they meet the following three essential criteria.

Criterion 1: Seeing the Big Picture – by way of a practical example(s), provide evidence that demonstrates how you have adapted your practice to embrace developments in the pharmacy profession and how this has impacted on your decision making.

Examples of the type of evidence the Panel will be looking for are outlined below.

You do not have to describe activities which meet each one of these bullet points:

- Demonstrates understanding of the bigger picture/wider social, political, economic, technological/innovation environment;
- Demonstrates an ability to think and plan ahead, including anticipating possible future challenges/threats and opportunities;
- Fully considers the impacts of decisions and takes into account factors at play inside and outside of the organisation, including organisational culture;
- Identifies, evaluates and manages risks and exercises critical judgment with confidence.
- Keeps up to date on/is alert to emerging issues, legislative change and changes in the profession that may impact on own and team's work.

Criterion 2: Changing & Improving - by way of a practical example(s), provide evidence which demonstrates your effective contribution to improving performance and delivering improvements.

Examples of the type of evidence the Panel will be looking for are outlined below.

You do not have to describe activities which meet each one of these bullet points:

- Is responsive, innovative and seeks out opportunities create effective change.

- Regularly reviews requirements/procedures/systems in order to make a project or activity successful or to make further improvements.
- Helps colleagues, team members and customers understand changes and why they have been introduced.
- Communicates change effectively to team members, ensuring their views are taken on board.
- Is prepared to take managed risks, ensuring these are planned and their impacts assessed/managed/mitigated.
- Measures performance and tracks change to ensure it brings about the desired improvements.
- Spots warning signs of things going wrong and takes decisive action to correct this, when required.

Criterion 3: Working Collaboratively - by way of a practical example(s), provide evidence that demonstrates how you proactively create, maintain and nurture a strong network of collaborative relationships to produce positive results.

Examples of the type of evidence the Panel will be looking for are outlined below. **You do not have to describe activities which meet each one of these bullet points:**

- Communicates effectively and constructively.
- Builds strong and effective working relationships and creates a diverse and inclusive environment.
- Work well as part of a diverse team with people from different backgrounds and experiences to achieve a common goal.
- Deals effectively with conflict.
- Creates an environment that encourages equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Seeks constructive outcomes in discussions, challenges assumptions but remains willing to compromise when it is beneficial to progress.

Section 5 - Application, Access NI and Selection Process

How to Apply

5.1 Application forms or further information about the process can be obtained from Public Appointments Unit at the address on the cover of this document, by e-mailing a request to: public.appointments@health-ni.gov.uk or by telephone on 02890 528355 or 02890 765789 Alternatively, you can download the information pack at: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/public-appointments-current-vacancies>

5.2 Hard copy or electronic versions of the application form are acceptable. You must not reformat the electronic application form. CVs, letters, or any other supplementary material in place of, or in addition to, completed application forms will not be accepted.

5.3 **You are encouraged to return your application via e-mail to:**

Email: public.appointments@health-ni.gov.uk

If you are unable to e-mail your application, and wish to post or hand-deliver it, the office address is provided in the cover page above.

5.4 Applications must be fully completed and legible, whether they are completed electronically or handwritten. Please complete your application form in **black ink** in either typescript Arial font size 12, single-line spacing or, if handwritten, preferably in block capitals. Applications not fully completed and those where the format has been altered will not be accepted.

5.5 Your application is very important. You must demonstrate clearly on your application form how and to what extent your experience is relevant to the published essential criteria for the post (including dates where appropriate e.g. dates from/to). There may be several aspects to a criterion, so ensure you provide evidence that shows how you meet all aspects. It is not enough simply to list the various posts that you have held. The Department will not make assumptions from the title of your post or the nature of the organisation as to the

skills or experience gained. Guidance on the Criteria Based Selection can be found at **Annex B**.

- 5.6 **You must NOT exceed the maximum 350-word count per essential criterion. Text beyond the allotted word count will be redacted by Public Appointments Unit (PAU) and not considered by the Panel carrying out the sift stage of the appointment process.**
- 5.7 The Information Booklet and Application Form can be provided in alternative formats. Any applicants who require assistance should contact PAU (contact details on cover sheet).
- 5.8 All reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the needs of applicants with a disability. Further information on the Guaranteed Interview Scheme can be found at paragraph 5.30

Timeframe for process

- 5.9 Application forms should be submitted by post, email or in person to arrive with Public Appointments Unit by **12 noon GMT on 26 March 2026** (see contact details on cover sheet). The date and time of receipt will be formally recorded on all applications. 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. The Department will not accept any application where there is a shortfall in the cost of the postage. All applications will be acknowledged on receipt.
- 5.10 Please check your application form before submitting it as **the Department will not examine applications until after the closing date.** Applications not fully completed and those where the format has been altered will not be accepted. Applicants whose application has not been accepted will be notified within 5 working days of the closing date.

- 5.11 Applicants, whether successful or unsuccessful at the application sift stage and/or at interview, will normally be informed within 5 working days following the sift of applications forms or within 5 working days of the date of the last interview.
- 5.12 Applicants who are unsuccessful at sift/shortlisting stage will be advised in writing of the outcome which will include the scores against each criterion. Further feedback on the panel's agreed assessment of their application can be provided on request. Where an applicant feels they have been unfairly excluded after sift, they may request that their application be reviewed by the Panel. All requests to review applications will be considered up to 10 working days following the date on which the "regret" letter was issued.
- 5.13 Those applicants who are unsuccessful at interview stage will be advised in writing of the outcome of their interview which will include feedback on their performance.

Additional Information

- 5.14 The [Public Appointments Guide](#) published by the Executive Office provides an overview of Public Appointments in Northern Ireland and includes information you may find helpful.
- 5.15 Similarly, applicants may find Partnerships between Departments and Arm's Length Bodies: [NI Code of Good Practice](#) published by the Department of Finance in March 2019 a helpful publication to read. This publication aims to set out principles of good practice which can be applied to derive greater value from, and bring consistency to, relationships between Departments and Arm's Length Bodies.

ACCESS NI

- 5.16 Access NI enables organisations in Northern Ireland to make more informed recruitment decisions by providing criminal history information about anyone seeking paid or unpaid work in certain defined areas, such as working with

children or vulnerable adults. The Department adheres to the [Access NI Code of Practice](#).

- 5.17 It is the Department's policy to carry out an Access NI Check for the appointment of all PSNI Council Members.
- 5.18 The criminal record check will be undertaken by Access NI, which is the responsibility of the Department of Justice in Northern Ireland and operates under the provisions of Part V of the Police Act 1997. It should be noted that a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining this position (the Department has a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders which can be provided on request).
- 5.19 The Department has a policy on the Secure Handling, Use, Storage and Retention of Disclosure information which can be provided on request.

Selection Process

- 5.20 Criteria based interviewing tests applicants 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 examples provide the Panel with information and evidence about you, and a deeper understanding of your ability.
- 5.21 The interview is a crucial part of the appointment process and thorough preparation is essential. You can prepare 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.

- 5.22 Further general guidance on the Criteria based selection can be found at **Annex B**.
- 5.23 Either the Interview Panel comprising three Members – the Department’s Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, the PSNI President and one CPANI Independent Assessor - or an appointed Sift Panel (para 5.26 refers) will carry out a sift of all accepted application forms to assess each applicant against the selection criteria.
- 5.24 When assessing each application against the selection criteria, the Panel will use a marking framework to determine how an applicant’s skills, knowledge and experience meets each of the criteria. Applicants will be awarded a score out of 5 for each criterion and must meet a minimum standard of 3 or above, in all criteria, in order to be invited for interview. All criteria will be weighted equally. Applications which do not meet the minimum standard will be sifted out at this stage.
- 5.25 In order to encourage diversity, the Department is committed to interviewing as many eligible applicants as practicable without further short-listing being applied. However, in the case of a high volume of applications the Panel may decide to limit the number of applicants it invites for interview. If this happens, the Panel will consider the aggregated scores, identify the top scoring applicants across the total of the essential criteria and agree a cut-off mark. If necessary, the Panel will drop the cut-off mark by one mark each time until a sufficient pool of candidates eligible for interview is in place.
- 5.26 With the agreement of the Commissioner, the Department reserves the right to employ a Sift Panel comprising three CPANI Independent Assessors to conduct the sift stage of written applications. If the Department opts to use a Sift Panel, the Independent Assessor allocated by CPANI to sit on the Interview Panel will be appointed to the role of Lead Independent Assessor on the Sift Panel.

- 5.27 Application forms provided to the Panel responsible for conducting the sift exercise will be anonymised, which means that it will not include your name or personal details.
- 5.28 The interviews will be conducted on a face-to-face basis. Applicants invited for interview will be eligible to claim reimbursement of reasonable travelling expenses incurred within the UK and Republic of Ireland in attending for interview. **Any travel plans from outside Northern Ireland, including accommodation requirements, MUST be approved in advance of booking by the Department's Public Appointments Unit.** If you cannot make the interview time offered, we will try our best to reschedule your appointment. An expenses claim form will be issued with your invitation to interview letter.
- 5.29 At interview, all applicants must satisfy the Panel that they adequately meet all of the relevant criteria. The Minister will take the final decision on who to appoint. The Selection Panel will score applicants at interview against an agreed pass mark and those found to be above the line will be recommended as suitable for appointment. The Minister will be provided with an unranked list of candidates found suitable by the Selection Panel. An applicant summary provided by the Panel, will provide the Minister with an objective analysis of each applicant's skills and experience, based on the information provided by each applicant during the appointment process and the Panel's assessment of that applicant.
- 5.30 The Department will operate a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) for this appointment. The GIS has been developed for applicants with disabilities or those with long term impairment or a health condition that is expected to last for at least 12 months. In these instances, provided that the applicant has demonstrated in their application form that they have met the essential criteria for the post, the applicant will be offered a guaranteed interview. **Should you wish to be considered under the GIS scheme please complete the separate GIS Application document** (included in the competition documentation or contact PAU for a copy (contact details on cover sheet)).

- 5.31 Applicants whom the Panel assess as not suitable for appointment will be advised by letter following interview.
- 5.32 Applicants whom the Panel assess as suitable for appointment and whose names are being presented to the Minister will be advised of this by letter following interview.
- 5.33 An Access NI check is requested for the applicant the Minister has selected for appointment. All documentation relating to Access NI will be destroyed in accordance with the Department's policy on the Secure Handling, Use, Storage and Retention of Disclosure information (paragraph 5.19 refers).
- 5.34 Once the Access NI check has completed you will be invited, by telephone, to accept the appointment. The appointment will then be formally confirmed in writing. You will be required to confirm acceptance of the post and the associated Terms & Conditions of appointment.
- 5.35 All other interviewees will be advised in writing of the outcome of their interview once the selection has been made.
- 5.36 The Minister may decide to create a reserve list to cover any vacancies that may arise within the 12 months following the completion of the competition.

Section 6 - Probity and Conflicts of Interest

- 6.1 The Department must ensure that any individual appointed is committed to the seven principles of conduct underpinning public life and values of public service. These (Nolan) principles are: **Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership**. The successful applicant will be asked as part of their appointment to sign a declaration committing to the seven principles.
- 6.2 Attached for your information at **Annex C** is a copy of “Probity & Conflicts of Interest – Guidance for Applicants”. Below is a link to a leaflet from the Commissioner for Public Appointments (NI), about “Conflicts of Interest, Integrity and Making a Complaint”:
- ["CPANI Leaflet, Guidance on Conflicts of Interest, Integrity and How to Raise a Complaint"](#) These provide information on these issues including some examples to help applicants evaluate whether or not they have a real, perceived or potential conflict.
- 6.3 The Department must take account of any actual or perceived conflict of interest. Therefore, applicants in their application form must disclose information or personal connections, which, if they were to be appointed, could lead to a conflict of interest or be perceived as such. Failure to do so could lead to the appointment being terminated.
- 6.4 It is very important that all applicants provide appropriate details on their application form of any interests which might be construed as being in conflict with the appointment for which they have applied. **All applicants will be asked if there are any real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest at interview.** If it appears, from the information provided on the form, that a possible conflict might exist, or arise in the future, this will be fully explored with the applicant with a view to establishing whether it is sufficiently significant to prevent the individual from carrying out the duties of the post. The Panel will do this at interview stage.

Insolvency Checks

6.5 The Department may also contact the Insolvency Service to check if applicants are recorded on the Disqualification of Directors or Bankruptcy registers. An applicant who has been judged bankrupt or has made a composition or arrangement with his creditors is disqualified for appointment under this competition (**Annex A** refers).

Other Public Appointments

6.6 Departments have a duty to satisfy themselves, as far as practicable, that those they appoint to the Boards of public bodies will carry out their duties in an efficient and effective manner. This Department may therefore check with other Departments if there are any probity or performance issues associated with applicants who hold public appointments. Similar information will be provided by this Department on request about all associated Board Members.

The Two Terms Rule

6.7 According to the CPANI Code of Practice those who have served two terms in the same position on the same Board cannot apply through open competition for a third term. If any applicant has served two terms in this position their application will be discounted at the sift stage.

Double Paying

6.8 Applicants who already work in the public sector need to be aware that no one should be paid twice from the public purse for the same period of time. 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 is not a duplication with salaried employment (unless allowed under the terms and conditions of employment). In the interests of minimising the potential for double paying to occur the Department reserves the right to contact your employer regarding your candidature.

Applications from Civil Servants/Former Civil Servants

6.9 All serving and former Northern Ireland Civil Servants are asked to consult Section 8 (*Rules on the Acceptance of Outside Business Appointments, Employments or Self-Employment by Civil Servants after leaving the NI Civil Service*) of the [NICS Standards of Conduct](#), to consider if an application under the rules is required and approach NICSHR Employee Relations as soon as possible.

Nationality Requirements

6.10 The Department has 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 applicant to provide evidence that confirms they can legally work in the UK if being offered a post. The Department will check the individual's passport, share code or other documents, if necessary, to confirm they have the appropriate permission.

Publicising Appointments

6.11 A Press Release will be published to announce the appointment. The Commissioner for Public Appointments also requires that the announcement about the successful applicant should contain details of their recent political activity. Consequently, should you be appointed, you will be required to complete a political activity form. Details of any political activity, together with some of the information that you have provided in your application form will be made public in the press announcement. This applies particularly to any other public appointments you may hold, and to any significant political activity recently undertaken by you. The Press Release will include:

- Your name;

- A short description of the body to which you have been appointed;
- A brief summary of the skills and knowledge you bring to the role;
- The period of appointment;
- Any remuneration associated with the appointment;
- Details of all other current public appointments held and any related remuneration received; and
- Details of any political activity declared in the last five years.

Section 7 - Equal Opportunities Monitoring and Complaints Procedure

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

7.1 The Department is committed to providing equality of opportunity and is required to monitor the gender, ethnic group, community background and disability of applicants to ensure that equal opportunities measures are effective in its appointments processes. Applicants are therefore asked to complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form issued separately. The information is purely for monitoring purposes. It is **not** made available to the Panel and does **not** play a role in the decision-making process.

Diversity in Public Appointments

7.2 The Department values and promotes diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity for all and appointments made on merit. The Department believes that the best Boards are those that reflect the community they serve.

7.3 The Department is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all people irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, ethnic group, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation or whether or not they have dependants.

7.4 Women are currently under-represented on the PSNI Council, and applications are particularly welcome from women for these positions.

Complaints Procedure

7.5 The Department is committed to getting this appointment process right first time. However, if you are not entirely satisfied with any aspect of our service, please tell us and we will do our best to resolve the matter. Our aim is to resolve any complaint quickly and you are invited initially to bring any concerns you may have to Public Appointments Unit. However, if you still feel dissatisfied after this approach, you may initiate a formal complaint in writing.

7.6 Please direct your concerns in the first instance to:

DoH Public Appointments Unit
Department of Health
Room 16, Annexe 1
Castle Buildings, Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SQ

Email: public.appointments@health-ni.gov.uk

Telephone: 028 90528355

DISQUALIFICATIONS

HOUSE OF COMMONS AND NI ASSEMBLY DISQUALIFICATIONS

Under the terms of the House of Commons Disqualifications Act 1975¹ and the Northern Ireland Assembly Disqualification Act 1975², existing MPs and MLAs cease to hold their elected office if they take up an appointment to a public body listed in the aforementioned legislation.

If an individual holding a public appointment decides to stand for election as an MP or MLA, it is their responsibility to check whether the public body to which they belong or the office that they hold is listed in the appropriate Disqualification Act.

If the public body to which an individual belongs or the office that they hold is listed in the Disqualification Act they must immediately notify the Department of their intention to stand for election. To avoid any disqualification issues from arising later they should resign their appointment before submitting their nomination as candidate in an election. If they have not resigned their public appointment before submitting their nomination as a candidate and are subsequently elected as an MP or MLA their election will be void.

OTHER HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE BODY/ARM'S LENGTH BODY DISQUALIFICATIONS

If you are currently serving as a Non-Executive of a Health and Social Care Body or any other Arm's Length Body, there is an onus of responsibility on applicants to not only examine the disqualifications of the organisation to which they are applying, but also to be aware of any disqualifications which exist on the body to which they currently serve.

In some cases it is not possible to hold two concurrent appointments, however you should note that disqualification is from appointment to a post, not application. In the

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1975/24/contents>

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1975/25/contents>

event of a relevant disqualification you may be required to resign from a current position in order to accept this post.

DISQUALIFICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO PSNI

As set out in the Council of the [Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland \(Appointments and Procedure\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2012](#), the following persons are disqualified for appointment:

Disqualification for appointment

A person is disqualified from appointment as a Member of the Council if that person—

(a) has at any time been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty or deception in the United Kingdom and the conviction is not a spent conviction;

(b) has at any time been convicted of an offence in the United Kingdom, and—

(i) the final outcome of the proceedings was a sentence of imprisonment or detention, and

(ii) the conviction is not a spent conviction;

(c) has at any time been removed—

(i) from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity in Northern Ireland or by an order made by the Charity Commissioners or the High Court in England and Wales on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity for which that person was responsible or to which that person was privy, or which that person by his conduct contributed to or facilitated; or

(ii) under—

(aa) section 7 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990⁽¹⁾ (powers of the Court of Session to deal with management of charities), or

(bb) section 34(5)(e) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005⁽²⁾ (powers of the Court of Session),

from being concerned with the management or control of any body.

(d) has at any time been removed from office as the Chair, or a Member, Convenor or Director, of any public body on the grounds that it was not in the interests of, or conducive to the good management of, that body that the person should continue to hold that office;

(e) at any time been adjudged bankrupt or sequestration of the person's estate has been awarded, and

(i) the person has not been discharged, or

(ii) the person is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim bankruptcy restrictions order under Schedule 2A of the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 1989(3) or Schedule 4A to the Insolvency Act 1986(4) (which relate to bankruptcy restrictions orders and undertakings) or sections 56A to 56K of the Bankruptcy (Scotland) Act 1985(5);

(f) has at any time made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, the person's creditors and the person has not been discharged in respect of it;

(g) is a person to whom a moratorium period under a debt relief order under Part V11A of the Insolvency Act 1986 (debt relief orders) applies, or is the subject of a debt relief restrictions order or an interim debt relief restrictions order under Schedule 4ZB to that Act (debt relief restrictions order and undertaking)(6);

(h) is subject to—

(i) a disqualification order or a disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002(7),

(ii) a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986(8), or

(iii) an order made under section 429(2) of the Insolvency Act 1986(9) (disabilities on revocation of a county court administration order);

(i) has been included by—

(i) the Independent Safeguarding Authority in a barred list (within the meaning of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007(10) or the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006(11), or

(ii) the Scottish Ministers in the children's list or the adult's list (within the meaning of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007(12));

(j) has at any time been subject to any investigation or proceedings concerning the person's fitness to practise by any licensing body, the final outcome of which was—

(i) the person's entry in a register held by the licensing body is suspended,

(ii) the person's entry is removed from a register held by the licensing body or there has been a decision that had the effect of preventing the person from practising the profession licensed or regulated by the licensing body, or

(iii) a decision allowing the person to practise that profession subject to conditions and those conditions have not been lifted;

(k) has at any time been subject to any investigation or proceedings concerning the person's fitness to practise by the Statutory Committee, in the course of which or where the final outcome was that—

(i) the person's entry in the register was suspended (including by an interim suspension order) and the order imposing that suspension has not been lifted,

(ii) the person's name was struck off the register (for a reason connected with the person's fitness to practise), or

(iii) the person's entry in the register was made subject to an order imposing conditions with which the person must comply (including by an order for interim conditional entry) and that order has not been lifted;

(l) has at any time been subject to any investigation or proceedings relating to an allegation that the person's entry in the register was fraudulently procured or incorrectly made, the final outcome of which was the person's entry being struck off the register;

(m) has at any time been subject to any investigation or proceedings concerning the person's fitness to practise by—

(i) any licensing body,

(ii) the Statutory Committee, or

(iii) the Scrutiny Committee,

and the Department is satisfied that the person's membership of the Council would be liable to undermine public confidence in the regulation of pharmaceutical chemists; or

(n) has at any time been convicted of an offence elsewhere than in the United Kingdom and the Department is satisfied that the person's membership of the Council would be liable to undermine public confidence in the regulation of pharmaceutical chemists.

GENERAL GUIDANCE

Criteria Based Selection Process

Criteria based selection is currently the most common method of making public appointments in Northern Ireland. What this means is that the onus is on you to provide evidence of workplace or personal performance which demonstrates that you can perform to the specified standard.

Under each of the criteria headings in the application form, you are required to provide specific and relevant examples of past behaviour which illustrate how you match the competences being sought. It is not just **what** you have done – but also **how** you did it.

You can use examples from your working life or personal life including any private, voluntary or community work you are, or have been, involved in.

It is not appropriate to simply list the various posts that you have held. Assumptions will not be made from the title of your post or the nature of the organisation as to the experience, qualities and skills gained.

You should structure your responses by setting a context for your examples, explain what you were trying to achieve, describe what you actually did and why, indicating your own individual contribution and outline the outcome or results.

Criteria Based Interview

If this is your first experience of a criteria based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:

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

A criteria based interview does however require you to:

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

In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:

- Situation:** Briefly outline the situation
- Task:** What was your objective?
What were you trying to achieve?
- Action:** What did you actually do?
What was your unique contribution?
- Result:** What happened?
What was the outcome?
What did you learn?

The Interview Panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience in relation to each of the criteria. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which illustrate your skills and abilities in each criterion area. You may draw examples from any area of your work/life experiences.

You are strongly advised to read the ‘Public Appointments Guide’ when preparing for interview - <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/execoffice/public-appointments-guide.pdf>

PROBITY & CONFLICTS OF INTEREST GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the information contained in the leaflet CPANI [“Guidance Leaflet on Conflicts of Interest, Integrity and how to raise a complaint”](#) which provides examples of the types of issues that may give rise to conflicts of interests and the [NIAO Conflicts of Interest: Good Practice Guide](#).

Standards of behaviour

Ministers expect that the conduct of those they appoint to serve on the Boards of public bodies will be above reproach. Everyone who puts themselves forward for a public appointment must be able to demonstrate their commitment to the maintenance of high standards in public life.

The Seven Principles Underpinning Public Life

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 take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or other friends.

Integrity - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

As part of the selection process you will be tested on your commitment to maintaining high standards in public life with particular emphasis on probity issues and conflicts of interest.

What is a conflict of interest?

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.

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?

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?

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 the Panel as much information as possible.

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

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. The summary of the outcome of the interview process, which is put to the Ministers, will include clear written reference to any probity issues or perceived or actual conflicts of interest connected to any applicant put forward as suitable for appointment. It will include sufficient information to ensure that the Ministers are 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?

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?

This situation may arise where the applicant 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 applicant in the application form. They will then explore this at interview with the applicant.

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

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.

In both cases, the issue should be discussed with the Chair of the Board and the Chief Executive of the body concerned, in consultation with the Sponsoring 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.

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.