

Request:

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information regarding the recent Director of Resettlement temporary promotion to a Grade 5 post in the Department of Health:

1. Approval and Business Case

- a) A copy of any business case or submission prepared to support the creation and filling of the temporary Grade 5 post.
- b) Details of the approval process, including the senior officials who authorised the appointment.

2. Advertising and Access to Opportunity

- a) Whether the opportunity was advertised.
- b) If advertised, where, when, and to which staff DoH groups it was made available.
- c) If not advertised department-wide, please provide the recorded rationale for limiting the opportunity to a particular business area or staff group.

3. Rationale for Restricting the Candidate Pool

- a) Any documented justification for restricting the opportunity to the Resources & Corporate Management Group (or any other specific group).
- b) Any assessment undertaken of whether the role required skills or experience unique to that group.
- c) Any consideration given to opening the opportunity to staff across the wider Department.

4. Role Requirements and Suitability

- a) A copy of the job description and key responsibilities of the post.
- b) Any documentation assessing the skills, experience, or relationships required for the role.
- c) Any recorded consideration of whether these requirements could be met by staff outside the relevant business group.

5. Selection Process

- a) Details of the selection process used.
- b) The number of candidates considered.
- c) Whether expressions of interest were sought beyond the immediate business area.

6. Policies and Compliance

- a) Copies of departmental policies and guidance governing temporary promotions and acting-up arrangements in force at the time.
- b) Any assessment or confirmation that this appointment complied with those policies.

7. Fairness and Equality Considerations

- a) Any documentation showing how fairness and equal access to opportunity were considered in this case.
- b) Any equality assessment or similar analysis undertaken.

8. Comparator Information

- a) The number of temporary Grade 5 promotions made in the past 24 months.
- b) For each, whether the opportunity was:
 - i. advertised department-wide, or
 - ii. limited to a specific business area and the rationale in each case.

Response:

1. Approval and Business Case

Response

- a) No business case was required to fill the Grade 5 post. The temporary promotion Grade 5 opportunity resulted after a Job Evaluation for Senior Post (JESP) review (Annex 5) that determined an existing post to be Grade 5 (Annex 3).
- b) As above, no business case required to fill post therefore no approvals required.

2. Advertising and Access to Opportunity

Response

- a) Yes.
- b) Director of Reset temporary promotion opportunity was circulated via e-mail on 28 April 2026 to all G7s and G6s in Resource and Corporate Management Group (26 staff in total) (Annex 4 - The names and email addresses of staff below Senior Civil Service grade have been redacted in this Annex. The redactions reflect application of Section 40 of the FOI Act – Personal Information and relate only to the names of junior members of staff).
- c) The rationale for not advertising the G5 Temporary Promotion vacancy across the Department is covered at point 16 of the DOH Vacancy Management and Resourcing Procedure (Annex 1) which states: “To help avoid destabilising effects across business areas, all new temporary promotion opportunities must be contained within Directorates.”

3. Rationale for Restricting the Candidate Pool

Response

- a) The justification for restricting the temporary promotion Grade 5 vacancy to Resources & Corporate Management Group is covered at paragraph 16 of the DOH Vacancy Management and Resourcing Procedure (Annex 1) which states:

“To help avoid destabilising effects across business areas, all new temporary promotion opportunities must be contained within Directorates.”

- b) The skills or experience required for the post were evaluated during a JESP exercise (Annex 5). The skills and experience required for the role were included in the Grade 5 job description. A copy of the job description is attached at Annex 2.
- c) This was not an option. Paragraph 16 of the DOH Vacancy Management and Resourcing Procedure (Annex 1) states: “To help avoid destabilising effects across business areas, all new temporary promotion opportunities must be contained within Directorates.”

4. Role Requirements and Suitability

Response

- a) A copy of the Job description is attached at Annex 2.
- b) The temporary promotion to Director of Reset opportunity was subject to a JESP review (Annex 5) which concluded the role being reviewed was determined to be Grade 5 (Annex 3 - decision letter). The skills and experience required for the Grade 5 opportunity were contained within the Job Description (Annex 2) for the Grade 5 role.
- c) None exist. This was not an option as paragraph 16 of the DOH Vacancy Management and Resourcing Procedure (Annex 1) states: “To help avoid destabilising effects across business areas, all new temporary promotion opportunities must be contained within Directorates in the first instance.”

5. Selection Process

Response

- a) The circulated Grade 5 temporary promotion opportunity advised “Selection will be via a paper sift of the information and evidence provided in the application form which will be scored by the RCMG G3 and Permanent Secretary” (Annex 2).
- b) The Grade 5 temporary promotion opportunity was issued to 26 staff. Six applications were received.
- c) The expressions of interest were sought from all G7 and G6 staff across the Resource and Corporate Management Group in line with paragraph 16 of the DOH Vacancy Management and Resourcing Procedure (Annex 1) that states: “To help avoid destabilising effects across business areas, all new temporary promotion opportunities must be contained within Directorates in the first instance.”

6. Policies and Compliance

Response

- a) A copy of the DOH Vacancy Management and Resourcing Procedure (reviewed March 2026) is attached at Annex 1.
- b) Resource and Corporate Management G3 liaised throughout the G5 temporary promotion exercise with the Head of People and Organisational Development to ensure adherence to the relevant policies.

7. Fairness and Equality Considerations

Response

- a) The Grade 3 of Corporate Management and Resource Group was required to adhere to the temporary promotion guidance contained in DOH Vacancy Management and Resourcing Procedure – Applicable from January 2025 (reviewed in March 2026) (Annex 1). Following this guidance ensures fairness and transparency when filling posts, in this case the temporary promotion of a Grade 5 in Resource and Corporate Management Group.

The expression of interest email that issued to all eligible staff and their line managers included a direction to line managers stating, “line managers are required to bring this notice to the attention of any eligible staff currently out of the office.” This line was added to ensure all eligible staff would be aware of the G5 opportunity, even if they are out of the office on any form of leave (Annex 4).

- b) None. Not required.

8. Comparator Information

Response

- a) There have been four Grade 5 temporary promotions over the past 24 months (01 June 2024 to 30/06/26). Two in Resource and Corporate Management Group and two in Health Care Policy Group.
- b) Three of the G5 temporary promotion opportunities were circulated within the Group where the vacancy was located. The rationale behind these three G5 opportunities being offered only within the group where the vacancy was located, was to adhere to paragraph 16 of the vacancy management procedure (Annex 1) “to help avoid destabilising effects across business areas, all new temporary promotion opportunities must be contained within Directorates in the first instance.”

To request a copy of attachments, please contact foi@health-ni.gov.uk

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