

## Requests to NICS HR for use of a Trawl as a Method to Fill

### **Staff Officer – Public Service pensions Policy and Legislation – IRC260785**

In order to fully consider requests from Business Areas, NICS HR Vacancy Management has advised that it would be helpful if responses to the following questions could be incorporated into the background information to the post and rationale for the Trawl request when being passed to NICSHR.

Questions to be considered and responded on are:

- **What are the proposed eligibility criteria for the trawl?**

*Practical experience of introducing changes to primary and/or secondary legislation in the Assembly. (I believe it is fair to remove timescales on this one to attract more applicants as the 3 year interregnum has resulted in very little legislation being made over the past 4/5 years)*

*and*

*At least one year's practical experience of contributing to the development and implementation of significant policies through drafting submissions, briefing, and communication with key stakeholders e.g. Ministerial Private Office/Permanent Secretary's Office.*

***Desirable*** (could be used for shortlisting if required)

*At least one year's experience of working in a public service pensions business area.*

- **Why are these considered essential?**

*Experience of working in a policy and Legislation role and of drafting private office correspondence to tight deadlines with accuracy is crucial in order to hit the road running in this small team dealing with a high profile policy area on complex subject matter.*

- **Do these criteria favour individuals already working in the area where the vacancy exists?**

*Not when there is no pensions specific criteria – Asking for pensions experience and policy and legislation experience would limit the pool and provide insufficient applicants with a risk of not filling the post. This branch deals with pensions policy and legislation teams across the public sector. In previous trawls it has also attracted applicants from P&L roles in much different policy areas from DEARA and DfC.*

*It would also be favourable to attract sufficient applicants that will allow other Departments with responsibilities for P&L in public service pensions schemes to draw from this competition also as McCloud work has increased the resource requirements across Departments*

**What are the specialist skills or aptitudes considered essential for this post (over and above the competences for the grade)?**

*Specific experience in Policy and Legislation required as stated above.*

- **Why could this post not be filled through the normal vacancy management processes?**

*Specific experience required in Policy and Legislation in order to be effective in the short term as stated above.*

- **What type and duration of training would be required for staff without the specialist qualifications, skills, experience etc to carry out the role?**

Introduction to Section 75	Links e-learning
Working with Ministers	Links e-learning
Assembly Questions	CAL
Legislation – A Foundation	CAL
Primary Legislation	CAL
Subordinate Legislation	CAL
Subordinate Legislation Template	OPSI
Effective Writing	CAL
Public Consultation & Engagement	CAL
Regulatory Impact Assessment	CAL
Introduction to developing policy	CAL

*It would take in excess of one year to complete the above training.*

- **Will successful applicants receive full training?**

*The expectation would be that applicants with the required experience will have already completed the generic suite of policy and legislation training – where there are any gaps from the identified training requirements this will be addressed through formal training and peer support.*

- **Has the business area appointed through means other than a trawl competition in the past? If so, why would this not be appropriate in this case?**

*In this branch posts from staff officer and above have only been filled by trawl in the past given the requirement for experience in policy and legislation. Posts below staff officer have been filled by elective transfer.*

- **Who would the potential candidate pool be? Are there pools of staff across the NICS who would have the experience required for this post?**

*In past experience trawls for this branch have attracted applications from policy and legislation staff in DEARA, DfC and DoJ as well as DoF. However the volume of applications has not been high. We do not ask for specific pensions experience along with the P&L experience as it would limit the pool too much. Given the public sector wide remit of this branch the P&L experience takes precedence over scheme specific experience for business reasons and to ensure that the pool of staff is not limited detrimentally.*

- **Have any other means to fill the post been considered (i.e. redistribution of work, staff from other branches, pause/stop work etc)?**

*Yes – but not appropriate at this time. Interest sought from other 3 branches in pensions Division with no interest shown – There is limited scope at SO in the Division and no surplus available – indeed other branches are currently seeking to fill positions due to the increase in resources required to implement McCloud work ..*

*Re-distribution of work considered but not appropriate for this post. This is a very small branch working on a high profile policy area with significant additional and new work emanating from a supreme court decision on age discrimination (McCloud ruling) impacting across the public sector so pausing or stopping activities is not an option as this will be a legislative requirement.*

- **Have you consulted with TUS regarding the desire to commence a Trawl competition to fill this vacancy? NICSHR would encourage early consultation with TUS in all cases where a Trawl is felt to be the most appropriate method to fill.**

*Yes - The filling of the post by trawl has been discussed and agreed at meetings of the Pensions Division LWC.*

It should be noted that the above is **not** a definitive list, and further information may be required to determine if a Trawl is the most appropriate method to fill.

All relevant information, including responses to the above, should be sent to [NICSHR.Resourcing@finance-ni.gov.uk](mailto:NICSHR.Resourcing@finance-ni.gov.uk) and copied to the HR Business Partners.