

**Department of Education**

**Non-Executive Board Members**

The Department of Education (DE) is seeking to appoint a Non-Executive Board Member (NEBM) to the Department’s Board.

NEBMs play an important role on the Departmental Board and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee by bringing an external and independent perspective. They perform this invaluable role by using their experience to support and challenge officials. The external view brought by NEBMs adds significantly to the corporate decision-making process and enables the Accounting Officer to gain assurance on additional governance and risk management issues.

The role of a NEBM may be suited to you if you are someone that:

• is interested in ensuring that public services are delivered in the most effective and efficient way;

• has an inquiring and inquisitive mind, with an ability to assimilate, assess and analyse complex information;

• possess high ethical standards, sound judgement and the ability to communicate ideas; and,

• can think creatively and have an ability to take a wider, strategic view.

This competition represents an exciting and valuable opportunity to make a real difference to the running of a Government Department and its agencies and to ensure that public resources are managed effectively.

NEBMs will receive a remuneration rate of £10,000 per annum. Time commitment is anticipated to equate to approximately 20 days per year.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 12:00 Noon on Friday 7 January 2022. Late applications will not be accepted.

A candidate information pack and application form can be obtained as follows:-

Website: Download directly from the page on the DE website:

Email to: [ibmrecruitment@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:ibmrecruitment@education-ni.gov.uk)

Telephone: 07714623448

By writing to:

IBM Recruitment

Departmental Business Services Team

Department of Education

Rathgael House

Balloo Road

Bangor

BT19 7PR

The DE is committed to the principles of appointments based on merit, openness and transparency of process. The DE is committed to providing equality of opportunity and welcomes applications regardless of religious belief, gender, gender identity, disability, race, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or whether or not you have dependants. Applications are particularly welcome from women, young people, members of ethnic minority communities and people with disabilities as these groups are currently under-represented in these types of roles. If you require the documents in an alternative format, please contact us at the above address.



**Department of Education (DE)**

**Non-Executive Member**

**Departmental Board & Member of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

Completed application forms (including CV) must be returned by email\* to:

[ibmrecruitment@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:ibmrecruitment@education-ni.gov.uk)

Closing date for applications is 12:00 noon on Friday 7 January 2022

\*All correspondence will be made via email unless you have a specific need for hard copy or an alternative format. Please contact Bryan Laverty with your alternative requirements:

Email: [ibmrecruitment@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:ibmrecruitment@education-ni.gov.uk)

Telephone: 07714623448

**CONTENTS**

**Page No**

Foreword 5

About the Department of Education 6

Roles and Responsibilities of DE Non-Executive Members 9

Person Specification 11

How to Apply 12

Selection Procedure 14

Terms of Appointment 17

Annex A: Seven Principles of Public Life 20

**Equality of opportunity**

DE is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all individuals. Applications are welcome regardless of gender, age, marital status, disability, religion, ethnic origin, political opinion, sexual orientation or whether or not you have dependants.

**FOREWORD**

The Department of Education (DE) is seeking to appoint one Non-Executive member to its Departmental Board, who will also be a member of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC). It is anticipated that the appointment will take effect from early 2022.

The core role and responsibilities of DE’s Non-Executive member are included on page 4 of this booklet. If you decide to apply for DE’s vacancy, you will be assessed against the specific criteria for the DE Non-Executive member’s role, which are listed on page 9. DE’s appointment process includes a formal interview.

This competition represents an exciting and challenging opportunity to contribute to the good governance of DE and assist in our work to support the Minister to deliver high quality, effective and efficient services to the education sector and wider community.

I hope that you are encouraged to apply for this important role and best wishes with your application.

**MARK BROWNE (Dr)**

**PERMANENT SECRETARY**

**Department of Education**

**ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

The Department is responsible for policy on and the central administration of education and related services in Northern Ireland. Its vision is

“a system that is recognised internationally for the quality of its teaching and learning, for the achievements of its young people and for a holistic approach to education.”

DE has a wide and complex range of functions, touching on all areas of a child’s wellbeing. As well as being responsible and accountable for the quality of education offered by early years providers, grant-aided schools and youth organisations, it also has responsibility for leading the development of the Executive’s Children and Young People’s Strategy and its Childcare Strategy.

To support its vision, functions and the delivery of the draft Programme for Government, DE has eight strategic priorities:

|  |
| --- |
| 1. **Make learning accessible to all**   We give all children and young people access to pre-school, school and youth education provision |
| **2. Improve the quality of learning for our children & young people**  We ensure that education provision is of a high quality and supports learning and progression |
| 1. **Look after our children & young people**   We support and promote positive physical and emotional health and wellbeing and support high-quality affordable childcare |
| 1. **Support those who need more help with learning**   Working with health & education partners, we deliver high quality services for children & young people, including those with Special Educational Needs |
| 1. **Improve the learning environment**   We promote equality of opportunity, respect for others, good relations and inclusivity and we provide modern, sustainable educational settings which are fit-for-purpose and facilitate shared learning |
| 1. **Tackle Disadvantage and Underachievement**   We improve developmental and learning outcomes for all children & young people, with a particular focus on those who are underachieving, at risk of underachieving, or disadvantaged |
| 1. **Support and develop our education workforce**   We develop and deploy teachers, other education professionals and support staff effectively, promoting high standards and leadership and improving health & wellbeing |
| 1. **Effectively manage, review and transform our education system**   We deliver our corporate governance and finance responsibilities while seeking to improve efficiency, increase sustainability and introduce new ways of learning |

More detail on the Department is available at <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/>

**Departmental Organisation**

In order to ensure good governance and effective working relations, appropriate mechanisms are in place. The Department operates under the direction and control of the Education Minister and is managed by a Departmental Board chaired by the Permanent Secretary.

The Permanent Secretary, Dr Mark Browne, is the Minister’s principal adviser on the Department’s responsibilities and is the Accounting Officer for Departmental expenditure. He is supported by the members of the Departmental Board. Two Non-Executives sit on the Departmental Board.

**Departmental Structure**

The Department is supported in delivering its functions by the following Arm's Length Bodies, each of which is accountable to the Department:

* Education Authority
* The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
* The Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment
* Youth Council for Northern Ireland
* The General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland
* The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
* Comhairle na Gaelscolaίochta
* Middletown Centre for Autism
* Exceptional Circumstances Body

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) provides inspection services and information about the quality of education.

**Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)**

The ARAC reports to the Departmental Board. Two Non-Executives sit on the ARAC, with one Non-Executive chairing the meetings. The Committee has an extremely important role to play in reviewing the comprehensiveness and reliability of assurances on governance, risk management, the control environment and the integrity of financial statements.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITES OF DE NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

The core role of the Non-Executive Members is:

Role of Non-Executive Members on Departmental Boards

The role of Non-Executive Members on a Departmental or Agency Board entails specific responsibilities. These can include:

* assisting and advising on the development of departmental business and strategic plans;
* monitoring and challenging the department’s performance in relation to its objectives and commitments;
* active participation in the planning of departmental budgets and in financial decisions;
* identifying and advising on new challenges, initiatives and opportunities;
* challenging the quality of policy making; and
* representing the department as required.

Role of Non-Executive Members on the ARAC

Non-Executive Members complement the balance of skills and experience of Government officials on the ARAC by bringing an independent, external perspective to the work of the Committee. The value of the Non-Executive Member lies in the constructive challenge function and the fresh, objective viewpoint that they provide. Non-Executive Members of the Audit Committee are responsible for advising the Accounting Officer and Board on:

* the strategic processes for risk, control and governance and the Governance Statement;
* the accounting policies, the accounts and the annual report of the organisation, including the process for review of the accounts prior to submission for audit, levels of error identified, and management’s letter of representation to the External Auditors;
* the planned activity and results of both Internal and External Audit;
* adequacy of management response to issues identified by audit activity, including External Audit’s management letter;
* assurances relating to the management of risk and corporate governance requirements for the organisation and its sponsored bodies;
* actions related to the management of IT and cyber risks;
* (where appropriate) proposals for tendering for either Internal or External Audit services; and
* anti-fraud policies, whistle-blowing processes and arrangements for special investigations.

In addition:

* the ARAC will periodically review its own effectiveness and report the results of that review to the Board; and

**ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF DE NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

The Non-Executive member who is appointed through this competition will be a member of DE’s Audit and Risk Assurance Committeeand may be asked to participate in, or chair, other sub-committees of the DE Board, which may be convened from time to time.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**Selection Criteria**

Candidates wishing to apply for this role will be required to demonstrate - through evidence provided in a personal statement and CV - how they meet the following selection criteria for the post.

1. The skills and experience the applicant will bring to ensuring that DE maintains effective and robust corporate governance arrangements, including risk management. Ideally, the applicant will have experience of membership of and/or chairing an audit and risk assurance committee.
2. The skills and experience the applicant will bring to planning, agreeing and monitoring the delivery of DE’s financial targets, and of identifying innovative ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources and assets.
3. The skills and experience the applicant will bring to helping DE build capacity to successfully deliver organisational reform and improvement.
4. The skills and experience the applicant will bring to strategic planning and management, of relevance to the wellbeing of children and young people and the effectiveness of their education and development.

**HOW TO APPLY**

If you wish to apply for this position, please provide the following **by no later than the closing date, Friday 7 January 2022 at 12:00 noon:**

* A **comprehensive CV** setting out your career history and including details of any professional qualifications. You must include specific information which demonstrates how you meet the above selection criteria.
* A completed **application form**. This includes a **personal statement** (maximum two sides A4, minimum 11 font) setting out evidence of the strength and depth of your experience, qualities and skills that demonstrate your suitability for the role as a Non-Executive in the Department of Education. You must include specific examples as evidence of how in previous activity you have demonstrated each of the four selection criteria outlined on page 6. These examples will be assessed by the selection panel to determine your suitability for this position.

The application form also asks you to provide details of any conflicts of interest, previous conduct and details of any convictions.

All applications should contain both of these documents. Applications should be emailed **by no later than 12.00 noon Friday 7 January 2022** to [ibmrecruitment@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:ibmrecruitment@education-ni.gov.uk).

The date and time at which an application was received as recorded by the Department’s IT system will be used to determine whether an application is received before or after the closing date/time.

If you have any queries regarding the appointment process or any other aspect of this competition, please contact Bryan Laverty on 07714623448 or at [ibmrecruitment@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:ibmrecruitment@education-ni.gov.uk).

**INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE DEADLINE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

When submitting applications, please note the following points:

* you must complete your application in at least font size 11 or, if handwriting, in legible block capitals using black ink;
* applications will not be examined until after the closing deadline;
* the panel will not make any assumptions about your role and can only assess you on the information provided;
* you can use an example(s) from your working life, where appropriate, or from your personal life, including any voluntary or community work you are or have been involved in;
* it is your unique role that the panel are interested in, not that of your colleagues; and
* it is your responsibility to ensure that your application is complete.

**SELECTION PROCEDURE**

The Departmental Board Secretary, Bryan Laverty, will acknowledge each application and update candidates regularly on the competition’s progress.

**Sifting and Shortlisting of Applications**

Following the closing date for applications, the panel will meet to consider applications and will carry out a sift exercise against a rating scale, to assess how the skills, knowledge, experience and other qualities presented in your application form meet the selection criteria. Applications which do not meet all the selection criteria will be sifted out.

Only those applications that meet the criteria will be progressed to the next stage. If a high number of applications are received, only the top scoring applicants will progress to the next stage based on the quality of the evidence provided. Please note that personal information (for example: name, address, school attended) will be removed from the CV before being presented to the panel.

**Interview**

During the formal interview, the selection panel will discuss the experience and skills that candidates have outlined in their CV and personal statement in more detail. Although the style of the interview will be conversational and flexible, candidates should be prepared to answer questions which seek to elicit further detail on how they can demonstrate the required qualities, skills and experience as described in the criteria for the post.

You will also be asked:

* about your understanding of the standards of behaviour required of appointees;
* if you have any business or personal interests that might be relevant to the work of the Department of Education and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest were you to be appointed; and
* if there is anything in your professional or personal history, which if brought into the public domain, may cause embarrassment or disrepute to the Department of Education.

The panel will explore any such issues in order to judge if the public would have confidence in your appointment.

It is anticipated that interviews will take place in late January by Zoom. Due to the limited availability of selection panel members, candidates should ensure that they are able to attend on the date notified as it is unlikely that an alternative date can be accommodated.

**Merit Principle and Order of Merit**

NICS departments are committed to encouraging a diverse range of applicants for these positions and to the principle of appointment on merit following an open and transparent process. Only those individuals judged to best meet the requirements of the post will be recommended at each stage of the competition.

Applications are welcomed from all backgrounds regardless of religious belief, gender, disability, ethnic origin, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or whether or not you have dependants.

At the formal interview, the selection panel will assess candidates against skills and experience required for the position. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. Those deemed suitable for appointment will be ranked in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant first. The order of merit will be considered valid for one year.

**Appointment**

The successful candidate’s appointment will be confirmed formally in writing. Those candidates not selected for appointment will also be advised in writing of the outcome.

Appointees may only hold one departmental post.

**TERMS OF APPOINTMENT**

**Duration of Appointment**

The appointment will be for an initial period of two years, which may be extended for further defined periods by agreement. The maximum total term of appointment is six years. The Department will conduct assessments of performance during the period of appointment.

Please note that if you wish to end your term early, the Department of Education will require a minimum of 3 months’ notice.

**Induction**

The appointee will be expected to undertake an induction upon appointment, which may involve meetings with individual Board members and familiarisation visits to Departmental business areas/ arm’s length bodies.

**Fees and Time Commitment**

The fees payable in relation to these responsibilities will be £10,000 per annum plus expenses. One day’s payment will normally cover attendance at a Departmental Board/ARAC or equivalent meeting, including preparation time for meetings and actions arising. All remuneration and expenses are subject to deduction of income tax and national insurance.

The time commitment is typically 20 days annually.

**Location/Travel**

The Departmental Board and ARAC meetings are currently taking place on Zoom because of Covid-19 restrictions, however, they would typically be held at the Department’s Headquarters: Rathgael House, Bangor. On occasions, meetings may take place at other locations throughout Northern Ireland.

The successful candidate must have access to a form of transport which will enable them to fulfil their duties.

Travel and subsistence expenses are payable at Northern Ireland Civil Service rates.

**Double Paying**

Applicants who already work in the public sector need to be aware that no one can be paid twice from the public purse for the same period of time. As a result, candidates who already work in the public sector may not be entitled to claim remuneration for this position if the duties are undertaken during a period of time for which they are already paid by the public sector. Each case will be considered individually, however, the guiding principle should be to avoid “double-paying”.

In the interests of minimising the potential for double paying to occur, the Department reserves the right to contact your employer regarding your candidature.

**Conduct**

The Non-Executive Member appointment is not a public appointment, nor does it constitute employment, but it is subject to civil service rules on conduct and political activity. Non-Executive Members do not have the same legal liabilities as non-executive directors in the private sector. Non-Executive Members are expected to adhere to the standards set out in the Nolan Principles of Public Life (**Annex A**). In line with these standards, and in line with the standards expected of civil servants, Non-Executive Members should not misuse their official position or use information acquired in the course of their official duties to further their private interests or those of others.

**Criminal Records Check/Security Vetting**

The successful applicant will be subject to a basic criminal records check as a condition of appointment. This check will be activated only as part of the pre-appointment checks.

**Publicising the Appointment**

A press release will be published to announce the appointment of the Department’s new Non-Executive Member. Some of the information that you have provided in your application will be made public in the press announcement, which will also include:

* + Your name;
  + A brief summary of the skills and knowledge you bring to the role; and
  + The length of the appointment term.

**Integrity and Conflicts of Interest**

The Department will ensure that the individual appointed is committed to the principles and values of public service. These principles are: **Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership** and are described more fully at **Annex A. Any private or personal interests that a potential appointee may have and that may be relevant to the work of the Department must be declared.**

The Department must take account of actual, or perceived, conflicts of interest. Therefore all candidates must disclose in their application forms any personal/ business interests or personal circumstances which may be, or could be perceived as, a conflict of interest with the potential to either influence their judgement in the role or damage the reputation of the Department.

Conflicts of interest are not necessarily a barrier to appointment, but both actual and perceived conflicts, if viewed as relevant, must be explored by the selection panel to ensure that the public can have confidence in the Departmental Board’s independence and impartiality.

Please refer to the NIAO Good Practice Guide on Conflicts of Interest for further information on this subject. This document is included in the application pack.

**ANNEX A**

**Seven Principles of Public Life**

The principles of public life apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in the civil service, local government, the police, courts and probation services, NDPBs, and in the health, education, social and care services. All public office-holders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. The principles also have application to all those in other sectors delivering public services.

* **Selflessness** – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.  They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

* **Integrity** – Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to 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 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.