

1.04 Vacancy Management

This policy is a consolidation of a number of existing policies related to the filling of vacancies in NICS. It explains:

- What substantive vacancies are - [Section 2 Substantive Vacancies](#)
- The use of priority pools – [Section 3 Priority Pools](#)
- What other methods might be used to fill available vacancies - [Section 4 Other Means of filling Vacancies](#)

The following terms within this policy are defined in the glossary:

There are currently no terms within this policy defined in the glossary.

You may also be interested in the following policies:

1.02 Mobility, 1.03 Elective Transfer, 1.06 Secondment, 1.07 On Loan – Temporary Transfers, 1.08 European Union Overseas Secondment, 2.01 Redundancy, 2.06 Redeployment, 7.02 Staff Welfare, 1.05 Career Opportunities and Promotion

This policy is version 4.0

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This homepage is only a guide to the policy, not the policy itself. In the event of any discrepancy between the content of this homepage and the associated policy, the wording of the policy shall apply.

1.04 VACANCY MANAGEMENT

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1.04 VACANCY MANAGEMENT

1 Introduction

1.1 The Vacancy Management Policy is a consolidation of a number of existing policies by which vacancies may be filled and protocols which are followed when considering how a vacancy should be filled. These protocols include full and timely involvement of Trade Union Side in line with normal arrangements.

2 Substantive Vacancies

1.2 A substantive vacancy is defined as a funded post which has been approved by Departmental HR (DHR) and does not have a postholder. Posts whose holders are on sick absence, maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, annual leave, special leave and so on, are not regarded as vacancies. These situations are regarded as temporary and may be dealt with by other options such as, for example, deputising or temporary promotion as appropriate.

3 Priority Pools

3.1 Responsibility for determining how and when vacancies will be filled rests with DHR who, in liaison with Line Managers, take into account a range of issues. Within these, however, there are a number of priorities that Departments are either obliged to or have agreed to follow. These are:

- a.** redeployment of surpluses
- b.** Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements
- c.** Compelling welfare considerations i.e. those in receipt of a welfare 1 or welfare 2 rating.

3.2 Policy 2.01 Redundancy in section 2 of the HR Handbook, Leaving the Service sets out the policy on redundancy and states that the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) will only consider compulsory redundancy as a measure of last resort. It follows, therefore, that the redeployment of surpluses are accorded the highest priority in filling vacancies.

3.3 Under DDA legislation we are required to make reasonable adjustments to your terms and conditions of service if you have been assessed as falling within the definition in the Act. This could for example, involve a change of duties, discipline, location or, in exceptional circumstances, grade. In dealing with cases of this nature, Departments should expect to be able to meet the agreed adjustments within their own areas. In exceptional circumstances, if this is not possible, Departments should consult with other Departments to ensure that every effort is made to meet the necessary adjustments.

3.4 Policy 7.02 Staff Welfare sets out the position of the Welfare Advisory Service and their role in the facilitation of requests for transfer on welfare grounds (section 2.10). Tribunal rulings have broadened the scope of DHR's responsibility to respond to such requests to include the wider NICS. Consequently compelling welfare cases will be considered as expeditiously as possible by Departments.

3.5 HRConnect will, on request, provide DHR with a report detailing those requiring priority consideration (as set out in section 3.1 above). Departments must consider all the names on each respective priority list before filling a vacancy by another means. It will be necessary for Departments to record that they have considered these cases and, if in exceptional circumstances they are not able to accommodate them, the reasons for their decision must be clearly documented. In respect of welfare cases, if the situation arises where cases are considered to be equal in all aspects, the date of the award of the welfare rating will be taken as the deciding factor.

4 Other Means of Filling Vacancies

4.1 Other cases warranting special attention will involve the transfer of staff who have received a formal written warning as a result of unsatisfactory performance, transfers necessary as a result of disciplinary measures, situations involving the personal security of staff, transfers necessary as a result of harassment allegations and investigations and recommendations from OHS relating to the personal circumstances of an individual. There is, however, no hierarchy within this group with each case being treated on its own merit. In dealing with such cases Departments should expect to be able to accommodate staff within their own Departments.

4.2 In addition movement of staff may be required for operational or business reasons. These will include, for example, moves necessary as a result of reorganisation or restructuring of Branches, Divisions or Departments; those involving the transfer of specific departmental grades for regulatory reasons; identifying posts for career break returners, those successful on lateral movement and those seeking to move under unified grading.

4.3 Subsequent methods of filling vacancies are:

- Promotion lists;
- Interest circulars;
- Elective transfers;
- Trawl competitions;
- External recruitment;
- Secondment opportunities.

There is no specific order in which Departments will use the above methods although initial consideration will normally be given to staff on existing promotion lists.

Each of the above methods is covered by its own policy that is shown separately in the Career Opportunities and Promotion Section of the HR Handbook. The rules

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detailed within the relevant policies must be adhered to, including consultation with Trade Union Side.