CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

ICT LEVEL 4
(EXECUTIVE OFFICER 1)

**Completed application forms must
be returned by email to Gráinne McCarthy
(grainne.mccarthy@eoni.org.uk) by**

by 12 noon on Friday, 6 March 2026

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WELCOME & BACKGROUND – ICT LEVEL 4 (EXECUTIVE OFFICER 1)

Thank you for your interest in this role. This is a rare opportunity to play a pivotal role in safeguarding democracy in Northern Ireland. As we prepare for elections in 2027, your work will shape how 1.4m registered voters experience the democratic process and the online processes they rely on.

The Electoral Office provides an exciting environment to gain experience, knowledge & skills in Information Technology. While doing so you will contribute to the running of successful elections - the cornerstone of democracy. Your work will involve managing datasets, developing forms and reports for use in the Electoral Office.

The electoral system in Northern Ireland is administered by the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), a statutory independent officeholder & the Head of the Electoral Office (EONI). The CEO is the Registration & Returning Officer for all elections and referenda in Northern Ireland and is supported by a permanent staff of 25 people.

EONI runs elections/referenda and compiles the electoral register. EONI manages scheduled and unscheduled elections which involve 1.4 million voters, 6,000 temporary staff, 1,400 ballot boxes across 600 polling places and 3 count venues. The organisation operates in a highly scrutinized, politically sensitive environment, where public confidence depends on robust planning, impartiality, transparency and excellent computer systems.

EONI has been through significant change to ensure the needs of electors are met in the modern age. This includes significant increasing use of online services through www.eoni.org.uk. Your role is central to the delivery of online and digital delivery for EONI. Further information is available on our website www.eoni.org.uk. Thank you again for considering this post.

Dr David Marshall

Chief Electoral Officer Northern Ireland (March 2026)

THE ROLE IN CONTEXT

If employed, you will be assigned to a specific post/work area. In general terms the work includes

- planning, deployment, management and implementation of IT work including the management and delivery of IT services in the EONI;

- assisting the establishment and implementation of digital changes in business processes. This will require analysis of business processes, identifying solutions and implementing new approaches when they have been accepted

- demonstrating creativity and innovation on behalf of the elector whilst considering the integrity and security of IT solutions. This will require ensuring all options are reviewed and appropriate standards applied.

- maintaining an awareness of the fast-moving developments in IT to inform the provision of well planned, developed & run IT systems

In more specific terms we are seeking candidates with developed programming skills, knowledge of SQL (structured query language) and data security. This will include the development of new secure online forms for public, political representatives and others to use in delivery of electoral services – this will require the use of MS Power Platform tools or other web-based form technologies.

The role will also include ability to manage and develop routines in MS SQL Server databases and using a range of data driven techniques to maximise the datasets held by the Electoral Office. In addition you may be required to develop technologies in MS Visual Studio, MS Power Platform and web-programming/CMS to create robust solutions.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title (Grade)	ICT Level 4 (Executive Officer 1 equivalent)
Location	Colby House, Belfast
Salary	Starting salary £37,255 per annum (£33,542 base & £3,713 data processing allowance)
Hours	37 hours per week with a flexible/hybrid working scheme
Leave	25 days + 12 public/privilege days (rising to 30 days + 12 public/privilege days after 5 years service)
Pension	NI Civil Service Pension Scheme
Contract	Permanent, full-time

DETAILED JOB ROLE:

To provide support to Electoral Office for Northern Ireland by undertaking a variety of diverse IT activities that will collectively ensure the efficient running of the Office. The work will include

(i)   development of new secure online forms for public, political representatives and others to use in delivery of electoral services. This will require the use of MS Power Platform tools other web-based form technologies. This aspect of the work involves developing and enhancing online forms to improve business practices and deliver a high degree of efficiency and accuracy.

(ii)   ability to manage and develop routines in SQL Server and MS DataVerse databases and using a range of data driven techniques to maximise the datasets held by the Electoral Office to enhance the business needs of the organisation;

(iii)   playing a critical role the development and delivery of other software solutions to meet business needs. This will include technologies such as Visual Studio, Power Platform, SQL, and web-programming/CMS to create robust solutions. To do so you will engage with staff, the public and others and use agile methods to ensure successful, on-time delivery.

MAIN SKILLS/ACTIVITIES:

- Database management (MS SQL Server) – especially developing and using MS SQL

Server stored procedures – this will be to undertake data cleansing, standardizing, and de-duplication of large datasets

- Developing, running and researching new methods of online data collection to automate the delivery of operational activities – this will include skills with JotForm/MS Power Platform or similar secure collection of data
- Working with a variety of data formats (CSV, MS SQL, Excel, TXT, APIs, XML etc).
- Developing code/algorithms to solve problems
- Collaborative approach to sharing ideas and solutions across teams inside and outside organisation
- Communicating findings using various means, including verbal and written reports and data visualisations
- Promoting continuous improvement through automating routine tasks and processes, reducing manual processing and saving time across the organisation
- Willingness to share and receive ideas and feedback regularly with colleagues

The post holder has a corporate responsibility to contribute to the effective discharge of the Section 75 duties in line with the Office Equality Scheme.

Given the nature of the post the successful candidate will be required to work outside core hours to:

- **assist the Chief Electoral Officer in delivering key elections services; and**
- **run and manage key computer systems during an election period.**

The list is not exhaustive but gives a good indication of the type of the duties the post holder will be expected to carry out.

From time to time the postholder may be required to undertake other duties to ensure the full delivery of services that the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland undertakes.

WORKING HOURS:

The standard working week is 37 hours per week. The Electoral Office operates a flexible/hybrid working scheme to support staff in managing their commitments. Elements of home/remote working are possible in line with business needs. During the election window period, you will be required to work full-time from Colby House to meet business needs.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA (tested on application form & at interview)

- A Level 6 or above (University degree at second class honours or higher) qualification with at least 50% element of Computing, Data Analysis, Software Engineering or other discipline relevant to Information Systems & Technology
  (Only courses where a computing etc.. content of at least 50% or more can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the panel will be considered relevant. The onus is on you to provide sufficient details to demonstrate this.)

- At least 3 years experience (college or work) of using Microsoft Office environment eg Word/Excel/PowerPoint/Access etc. or other similar Office software environments (Google, Libre Office etc)

- At least 6 months experience (college or work) of using structured query language in MS SQL Server or other large-scale database tool

DESIRABLE CRITERIA (tested on application form/during interview)

- Experience of handling Electoral Register database/software or other large-scale population register-type equivalents

- Experience of developing online digital forms (using MS Power Platform or similar technology) to enhance business processes – this includes programming, managing security, design and user interface development

- Experience of a business intelligence software package (PowerBI, SQL Server Reporting Service, Crystal, JasperStudio or similar)

- Experience of managing and analysing large complex datasets including data matching, query design and SQL procedure development

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Candidates must not be a member of any organisation or society which might be construed as a potential conflict of interest. This includes any employment or personal connections (current or previous), which might give rise to public speculation. This includes but is not limited to:

- Obtained office as an MP, MEP, member of the N.I. Assembly, local Councillor or other political office.
- Stood as a candidate for one of the above offices.
- Held office such as Chair, Treasurer of Secretary of a local branch of a political party.
- Canvassed on behalf of a political party or helped at elections.
- Been a member of a political party
- Spoken publicly on behalf of a political party or candidate.
- Acted as a political agent for a candidate in an election.
- Worked (either paid or voluntary) for any political party or candidate.
- Signed the nomination paper of any candidate(s) in an election.
- Applicants must also not have been convicted of an offence under electoral law
- Applicants must also not have undertaken any other political activity which may be considered relevant.

Candidates may also be queried to make an assessment of whether any conflict of interest exists. If appointed any failure to be candid in this assessment could result in dismissal.

MAIN TERMS AND CONDITIONS

SALARY: The base salary range this post is £33,542 – £34,231 ([NI Civil Service Pay Scales](#)). The post also attracts an additional annual Data Processing Allowance of £3,713 per annum. **This gives a total starting salary of £37,255.** Starting salary is at the bottom of the scale, with progression over three years. Pay-scales are reviewed in line with the NI Civil Service.

HOLIDAYS: You will enjoy **25 days annual leave**, rising to **30 days after five years' service**, plus **12 public and privilege holidays** each year.

PENSION: Staff benefit from membership of the **Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme**, one of the most attractive packages available in the public sector. Further details are available at [Civil Service Pensions NI](#).

APPOINTMENT: This is a **full-time, permanent position**. Appointments are subject to two satisfactory references, including one from your current/most recent employer.

WORKING HOURS: The standard working week is **37 hours.** The Electoral Office operates a **flexible/hybrid working scheme** to support staff managing commitments – outside election periods home-working is supported. During election periods, additional hours may be required to meet business need.

LOCATION: Roles are based in our modern open plan offices in Colby House, Belfast – see [link](#). On site, staff have access to limited car parking and changing facilities for those who cycle to work. At election time staff are required to travel to various locations across Northern Ireland to assist in the running of elections across various venues.

Elements of home/remote working are possible, this will be in line with business needs. During election periods, you will be required to work in Colby House to meet business needs.

PROBATION, TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT: All new appointments are subject to a 12-month probationary period, during which support, and feedback will be provided to help you succeed in the role. If a candidate's performance, conduct or attendance during their probationary period is not satisfactory, their appointment may be terminated.

We place a strong emphasis on training and professional development. We encourage our IT grade employees to complete a wide range of training from Microsoft Academy and other 'in person/on-line' training sources. In addition, you may have the opportunity to travel across the UK and Ireland to observe elections, learn from best practice, and build your expertise.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Candidates are strongly advised to read all the sections of the Candidate Information Booklet and the other useful information and links before completing their application form. Valuable information is available on the Electoral Office website at www.eoni.org.uk.

Please note:

- CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms cannot be accepted and will **not** be considered.
- Applicants must complete the application form in Arial font size 12.
- Candidates will be shortlisted for interview solely on the basis of the information given on the totality of the application form.
- Candidates should ensure that they provide evidence of experience giving length of experience, examples and dates as required. It is not sufficient to simply list duties and responsibilities. If they do not provide sufficient detail the selection panel may not shortlist candidates for interview.

Completed application forms and separate equality and diversity monitoring form should be sent by email to Gráinne McCarthy grainne.mccarthy@eoni.org.uk no later than 12 noon on Friday 6 March 2026.

Please do not send paper applications. Equality monitoring forms will be removed from application forms upon receipt and registered separately.

Shortlisting and Appointment Panel

The information provided within the application form will be used for shortlisting purposes to assess which candidates meet the required criteria to be brought forward to the next stage in the assessment process. It is the responsibility of the candidate to clearly demonstrate how they meet the criteria specified with relevant examples where appropriate. The Panel reserves the right to enhance the selection criteria as it sees fit in the event of a large volume of applications.

Applications will be considered for shortlisting purposes by the Panel who will also conduct the interviews. The Panel will include the following members:

- Stephanie Kelly   Deputy Chief Electoral Officer Northern Ireland - Chair
- David Marshall   Chief Electoral Officer Northern Ireland
- Daryll Madine   Head of Data Services, EONI

Shortlisting and Interview Process

Candidates will be shortlisted for interviews according to the candidate's responses to the criteria set out in this booklet and the accompanying application form.

The interview will be competency based, and the panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your experience. Further information on the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) competency framework can be accessed through www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk

Equality Statement

The Electoral Office is an Equal Opportunities Employer. The Electoral Office welcomes applications from all Section 75 groups regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, marital status, people with or without dependants, political opinion, religion, or sexual orientation.

Disability Requirements

We ask on the application form if applicants require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability, to enable them to attend any part of the selection process.

Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process. If an applicant has indicated on their application that they have a disability, are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, the applicant may be required to outline any adjustments they consider are necessary to enable them to fulfil the requirements of the role.

KEY DATES

Date	Stage
Thursday 19 February 2026	Applications open
Friday 6 March 2026	Applications close (12 noon)
Monday 30 March – Tuesday 31 March	Interviews to be held in the Electoral Office in Belfast

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Right to Work and Nationality Requirements

The Electoral Office must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom and satisfy the Nationality requirements for appointment. Please note all successful applicants for external recruitment will be subject to a Nationality validation check.

Applicants must be either:
  i.   UK national; or
  ii. National of the Republic of Ireland; or
  iii. National of a Commonwealth country; or
  iv. Nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Iceland or Liechtenstein with settled or pre-settled status under the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS); or
  v.   Nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Iceland or Liechtenstein who have made a valid application for settled or pre-settled status under European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS); or
  vi. Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals working in the Civil Service or who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service; or
  vii. Certain family members of the relevant EU, EEA, Swiss & Turkish nationals

All candidates are required to state their nationality and the category they are applying for in the Right to Work and Nationality Requirements response box of your application form.

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For candidates applying under categories iii – vii you are required to provide the confirmation of Right to Work and Nationality Requirements, including your 'Share code' in the response box of your application form.

You should provide details of your 'Share code' in the 'Share code' field which will be used to validate your Right to Work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your 'Share code' at https://www.gov.uk/evisa/view-evisa-get-share-code-prove-immigration-status

Failure to provide the requested information will result in your application being rejected.

EU Settlement Scheme EU, other EEA, Swiss citizens and family members provides guidance on EUSS and certain family members.
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Where a candidate has a Right to Work status which has a time limitation, ongoing checks will be in place to ensure the Right to Work is maintained.

Further guidance on Nationality requirements is available in the Nationality Guidance section of the NICS Recruitment website.

Security Vetting Procedures

The successful candidate will be required to hold or obtain security clearance at Security Check (SC) level (see https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/united-kingdom-security-vetting-clearance-levels/national-security-vetting-clearance-levels)

Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

EONI follows NICS Ex-Offenders Guidance. This information is available upon request.