

Starting Pay on Appointment Policy and Procedure

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Alternative Formats

This documentation can be made available in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, disk, audio tape or in an ethnic-minority language upon request. Requests for alternative formats can be made to the Probation Board using the following contact information:

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Starting Pay on Appointment Policy

1. Introduction and purpose

- 1.1. This policy is introduced by the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) to aid recruitment and appropriately remunerate appointees to posts in PBNI.
- 1.2. PBNI recognises that, to provide the services it is contracted for, it needs to recruit employees with the correct skills and experience. To do this, one of the important factors is to ensure that employees are paid in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner.
- 1.3. The policy and supporting procedure set out the requirements for determining the starting point on the salary scale for appointees.
- 1.4. All appointments must be made in line with the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all employees of PBNI, regardless of age, marriage (including equal/same sex marriage) and civil partnership, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, or gender identity or gender expression.

3. Aims of this policy

- 3.1. To set out the guidelines which will support fair, transparent, and consistent approach to starting pay and for appointees.
- 3.2. PBNI wishes to provide a framework within which it may recognise and reward previous work experience that is relevant to, and provides added value to, the advertised job requirements, where there is a business need to do so. This may include experience within PBNI itself, in circumstances where staff return to PBNI after undertaking employment elsewhere.

- 3.3. PBNI has a responsibility to ensure that it abides by all anti-discrimination legislation in the application of its approach to pay.

4. Key responsibilities

- 4.1. This section outlines the roles and responsibilities for the main parties involved in decision making or making recommendations in relation to the application of this policy and procedure.

Chief Executive

- 4.2. It is the role of the Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, to consider and approve or decline applications for payment above the starting point of the salary scale for new appointees, in line with this policy and procedure.
- 4.3. The Chief Executive should reconcile PBNI responsibilities for the control of public expenditure with its responsibilities as an employer.

Senior Staff

- 4.4. Senior staff involved in the Workforce Planning Group, must consider any application for pay above the normal starting salary for approval by the Chief Executive. This will include any new staff member who requests that PBNI consider previous experience or where they had previously worked for PBNI and were re-joining.

Human Resources

- 4.5. It is the role of Human Resources to:
 - Provide advice and guidance in the implementation of this policy and procedure, including procedural matters.
 - Provide guidance on potential appropriate starting pay point in respect of applications made under this policy and procedure.

- Ensure that a consistent approach is adopted with regard to pay generally so that PBNI is acting in accordance with the equality legislation including, the ECNI's Equal Pay Code of Practice¹.
- Provide assurance that this policy is being adhered to through regular review and reporting mechanisms.

5. Equality, Human Rights and Privacy Impact Assessments

5.1. An Equality, Human Rights and Privacy Impact Assessment has been completed which recorded that this policy will have a neutral impact.

6. Communications

6.1. This policy and accompanying procedure will be communicated to all employees and will be accessible via the internet.

7. Formal Review

7.1. The application of this policy and procedure will be reviewed after 12 months of implementation by the Head of HR and OD, reporting to the Chief Executive, and Senior Leadership Team, and in consultation with Trade Unions (or earlier if required).

8. Links

8.1. This policy links to the following:

- Recruitment and Selection Policy (2023)
- Equal Opportunities Policy (April 2019)
- Career Break Policy and Procedure (1 March 2019)

¹ ECNI Equal Pay Code of Practice [Layout 1 \(equalityni.org\)](https://www.equalityni.org/)

Starting Pay on Appointment Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1. PBNI commits to ensuring that posts are graded through the agreed job evaluation scheme and process.
- 1.2. PBNI also commits to ensuring that the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure are adhered to in relation to the advertising of job opportunities with PBNI.
- 1.3. Information will be made available to potential candidates, advising of the Starting Pay on Appointment Policy and Procedure so that they understand that in some circumstances, approval may be given to an appointee starting at a higher point than the bottom of the scale associated the role.
- 1.4. Where an application from a successful candidate is made for a higher starting salary than the advertised minimum, for the post, consideration should only be given where there are justifiable business reasons for doing so.
- 1.5. Where a higher starting salary is considered then this should be as close to the minimum as possible.
- 1.6. Higher starting salaries therefore must be used sparingly, bearing in mind the need to have regard to:
 - market demand relating to specific roles and market rates, where appropriate;
 - the need to avoid creating anomalies in pay relativities between new recruits and existing staff; and
 - the need to give individuals an opportunity to demonstrate that they can undertake the full range of duties of the post.
- 1.7. Exceptional skills or experience do not automatically justify a higher starting salary. The skills and experience must be relevant to the post and contribute to the individual's ability to carry out the duties of the post.
- 1.8. Higher starting salaries should not be awarded simply to match a successful candidate's existing salary. Immediate salary level is only one element in the remuneration package.

1.9. Remuneration should be viewed as a whole package and other terms and conditions (T&Cs) of service available to the successful candidate should be taken into consideration, which including for example:

- the value of NILGOSC pension arrangements
- the availability of flexible working hours and patterns
- security of tenure (if for example a successful candidate does not have a permanent contract with the previous employer)
- annual leave and public holiday entitlement
- occupational sick pay arrangements, parent's pay (maternity leave and pay, adoption leave and pay, paternity leave and pay)
- Hybrid working arrangements
- Learning and development support.

1.10. There may also be a number of reasons underlying a candidate's decision to join PBNI such as the type and range of work we do, the opportunity for further training and development or suitability of location or hours of the post.

1.11. The expectation therefore is that only a minority of applicants will qualify for a higher starting salary.

1.12. There is no appeal mechanism for decisions with regard to starting salary.

2. Consideration of applications for appointment above the minimum starting salary

2.1. Applications for salary above the minimum salary for the post, must be made in writing when a conditional offer of employment is made.

2.2. Applicants must use Form: PBNI Application for Appointment Above Normal Starting Salary (Appendix 1).

2.3. Consideration will be given to the Application and the evidence supporting it which must include:

- Confirmation of date of appointment to the relevant post including title/grade/band and the date of leaving employment.
- Details of pay scale, point on scale, salary at point of leaving, confirmed by way of pay slip.

- Confirmation of contracted working hours.
- Copy of the relevant Job Description, which should include the Personnel Specification.

2.4. Further to submission of the Application, an acknowledgement will be provided within 5 working days and a decision issued within 20 working days of the application being made. The appointee will have a set timeframe to respond to the offer, depending upon the circumstances (e.g., urgency) associated with filling the post.

3. Former PBNI staff re-joining PBNI.

3.1. Former PBNI staff who are appointed to a post they have previously held, may start at the point on the pay band that they left as long as the break in service does not exceed five years in total.

3.2. Where an employee returns to PBNI following a break in service and they have been in other roles during the period, they may be reengaged at the pay point and on the T&Cs on which they left (annual leave, occupational sick pay, maternity pay), subject to any variations of T&Cs agreed through the Joint Negotiating and Consultation Committee framework and implemented in the intervening period. This will be honoured provided that a break in service does not exceed five years.

4. Recognition of Service of an Agency Worker Engaged by PBNI

4.1. Service delivered by an Agency worker engaged by PBNI will not count towards continuous service, as the Worker has been in the employment of the specific Agency.

4.2. PBNI will however recognise time worked and pay point which the Agency Worker is on when making an offer of employment, providing there is no break in service between the last date worked and the starting date of the new appointee.

4.3. However, for the purposes of entitlement, PBNI will honour entitlements to these benefits, that may have been acquired during the duration of the agency contract.

5. Formal Review

5.1. The application of this procedure will be reviewed after 12 months of implementation by the Head of HR and OD; and every at the normal 4 years review period.

6. Links

6.1. This policy links to the following:

- Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure (2023)
- Equal Opportunities Policy (April 2019)
- Career Break Policy and Procedure (1 March 2019)