



Pay on Appointment Policy and Procedure

Policy Owner

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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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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 successful applicants for positions in 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.
- 2.2. The policy does not apply to Probation Officer (AYE) posts.

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 pay a new appointee above the normal starting salary where they are either:

(a) Returning to PBNI after a break in service of up to 5 years;

or

(b) Are a current employee returning to the same role previously held in PBNI within the last 5 years.

or

- (c) Have skills and / or work experience that is **directly relevant to**, the advertised post they have been offered; and there are justifiable business reasons for doing so. *For noting, for example, experience of working as a social worker in a residential environment, may not be considered directly relevant to the work of a Probation Officer.*

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.
- 4.2. PBNi has a responsibility to ensure that it abides by all equality and anti-discrimination legislation in the application of its approach to pay.

Chief Executive

- 4.3. 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.
- 4.4. The Chief Executive should reconcile PBNi responsibilities for the control of public expenditure with its responsibilities as an employer.

Senior Staff

- 4.5. Senior staff are involved in the making recommendations to the Chief Executive in relation to any application for a starting salary above the minimum point for the advertised pay band.
- 4.6. They will make recommendations based only on the information provided by the candidate on the Starting Pay on Appointment Application Form.

Human Resources (HR)

- 4.7. It is the role of HR to:
- Inform applicants in Candidate Information packs of the opportunity to apply for higher starting pay, where applicable.

- Inform applicants at conditional offer stage that they have a specified time limited opportunity to apply for a higher starting pay and to manage the application process promptly so that a firm offer can be made based on approved salary, further to consideration of the application.
- Provide general advice and guidance in the implementation of this policy and procedure, including procedural matters.
- Provide details of the pay bands and NJC pay points.
- Ensure that a consistent approach is adopted with regard to pay generally so that PBNI is acting in accordance with the equality and anti-discrimination 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.
- Process all applications in a timely way.

5. Assessment of candidate submissions for higher starting pay

- 5.1. A Pay on Appointment panel will make a recommendation to the Chief Executive further to any application for a higher starting pay, provided it is received in the necessary time frame noted in a conditional offer letter.
- 5.2. Any recommendations for a starting salary above the minimum point of the advertised pay band must be based on:
- 5.3. evidence of directly **relevant skills and / or experience** set out in the application form, to the post being offered;
- 5.4. Any qualifications over and above those required for the post that are directly relevant to the post, for example qualifications that would normally be provided by PBNI to support a new start in the post;
- 5.5. Justifiable business reasons, that a post is regularly hard to fill, there is a need to recruit experienced staff to supplement inexperienced teams, or in reference to market rates.

¹ ECNI Equal Pay Code of Practice [Layout 1 \(equalityni.org\)](https://equalityni.org/Layout%201)

6. Equality, Human Rights and Privacy Impact Assessments

- 6.1. This policy has been screened in relation to Equality, Human Rights and a Privacy Impact Assessment has been completed which recorded that this policy will have a neutral impact.

7. Communications

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

8. Formal Review

- 8.1. The application of this policy and procedure will be reviewed four years after implementation or sooner if required, annually.

9. Links

- 9.1. 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)

Pay on Appointment Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Applicants are informed in Candidate Information Booklets about the Pay on Appointment Policy and Procedure and in their conditional offer of employment, where applicable.
- 1.2. Applicants who wish to apply for a higher starting salary than the bottom point of the salary for the advertised post can submit an application in writing. It is the responsibility of applicants to provide the correct information for their application to be considered. PBNi will only consider the information provided on the Starting Pay on Appointment Application Form, received in the stated timeframe which will be noted in a conditional offer of employment.

2. Types of applications

There are three circumstances which can be considered for higher starting pay on appointment.

(a) Former PBNi employees returning after a break in service with PBNi of no more than 5 years

Former employees who have been offered a post can be appointed to the same point on the salary scale on which they left (or equivalent as per arrangements for pay modernisation); and have the terms and conditions of employment apply also. The period of the break in service will not count towards any service related T&Cs. The break in service can be up to a total of five years.

(b) Current PBNi employees returning to a post previously held with PBNi

Current staff who are returning to a role previously held in the last five years, may be appointed to the salary point they left on.

Appointees in categories a) and b) do not have to make a formal application as HR will carry out a check on the leaving date and salary, T&Cs details.

(c) New appointees to PBNI

Successful applicants who have been made conditional offers of employment can apply in writing for a higher starting point than the bottom of the advertised salary scale.

They must provide sufficient information in their Starting Pay on Appointment Application that the skills and / or experience and / or qualifications they have are directly relevant to the post they have been offered.

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

- 3.1. Candidates who are successful in a recruitment campaign will be notified of the ability to apply for a higher starting pay than the advertised bottom point of the salary scale advertised for the post. They will be notified of this opportunity in their conditional offer of employment. They will have a specific deadline to return an application.
- 3.2. Applicants must use Starting Pay on Appointment Form to provide the to submit an application.
- 3.3. Applications must be received within 10 working days of receipt of the conditional offer of employment.
- 3.4. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide sufficient information so that their written application can be considered. No other information will be considered.
- 3.5. HR will convene a panel meeting of the Pay on Appointment Panel within 10 working days of receipt of the submitted application. The panel will provide their recommendations to the Chief Executive within 5 working days.
- 3.6. The Pay on Appointment Panel will be responsible for providing the Chief Executive with detail of their recommendation, i.e.
 - 3.6.1. In support of the application with detail of the new pay point to be offered, setting out the reasons for their recommendation; or
 - 3.6.2. Not in support of the application, setting out the reasons for their recommendation.
- 3.7. The Chief Executive will normally issue a decision within 10 working days of receipt of the recommendation and communicate this to HR and the Panel.

- 3.8. HR will write to the applicant with the decision regarding their application within 5 working days of the Chief Executive's decision being confirmed.
- 3.9. There is no appeal mechanism for decisions with regard to starting salary after a decision is issued.

4. Recommendations on higher starting salaries

- 4.1. A Pay on Appointment Panel will consider the applications for higher pay. The members of the Panel are normally:
- Directors (x2) (minimum one Director)
 - Head of Finance and Estates (or their nominee)
 - Head of HR and OD (or their nominee)
- 4.2. The People Manager and Deputy Head of Finance may be asked to provide information to assist in decision making and record decisions.
- 4.3. Where a higher starting salary is considered then this should be as close to the minimum as possible.
- 4.4. 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.
- 4.5. Exceptional skills or experience do not automatically justify a higher starting salary.
- 4.6. Higher level qualifications than those requested in the Person Specification should not be considered relevant in the assessment of an application, except where a particular qualification for a particular work area may be required after a new employee has begun employment and the new employee already has such qualifications.

- 4.7. 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.
- 4.8. 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 include for example:
- the value of NILGOSC pension arrangements
 - the availability of hybrid arrangements and flexible working hours
 - 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)
 - Learning and development opportunities.
- 4.9. 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.
- 4.10. The expectation therefore is that only a minority of applicants will qualify for a higher starting salary.

5. Former PBNI staff re-joining PBNI / restarting a previously held role.

- 5.1. 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 from either the organisation or the post does not exceed 5 years in total.
- 5.2. Where an employee returns to PBNI following a break in service from PBNI or a specific role in PBNI, 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 5 years.

- 5.3. The Head of HR and OD or their nominee is responsible for authorising the higher starting salary for returning staff in this category.

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

- 6.1. 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.
- 6.2. PBNI will, however, recognise time worked and the 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.
- 6.3. For the purposes of entitlement to annual leave, PBNI will honour entitlement, which may have been acquired during the duration of the agency contract.

7. Links

- 7.1. This policy links to the following:

- Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure (2023)
- Equal Opportunities Policy (April 2019)
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