

These are examples only. Please remember that declaring a conflict won't necessarily stop you being appointed. You should consider carefully your own circumstances to decide whether or not a real or perceived conflict exists and be ready to discuss it with the Selection Panel at interview.

Even if you do not think you have any conflicts of interest you will still be asked about the issue if you are interviewed.

Integrity

Anyone applying for a public appointment must understand and be committed to the principle of integrity. You will be asked about this at interview.

Feedback

You can request feedback on the outcome of your application from the Department running this public appointment competition. This application pack will contain relevant contact details. Feedback can be delivered in writing, e-mail or by phone. It is up to you. It should be useful, jargon free and based on the assessment of the selection panel. Please see paragraphs 3.47 and 3.48 of my Code of Practice.

CPANI

The Commissioner
for Public Appointments
Northern Ireland

*From John Keanie,
Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern
Ireland*

Thank you for your interest in this appointment.

Public bodies have a vital role to play in all our lives e.g. they help run the NHS, arrange our education services and advise government on how we should look after our ancient monuments. Appointments to boards of public bodies are commonly known as *public appointments*.

Appointments are made by individual Government Ministers. If you decide to apply for a public appointment the administration of your application will be dealt with by civil servants in the relevant Department. Occasionally a recruitment consultant may handle this process. Whoever deals with the competition, it is overseen by me as Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland. I regulate the process but am not involved in individual competitions.

Departments must follow my Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies to ensure that appointments are made on merit, after a fair and open competition. The Code of Practice covers Ministerial appointments to a wide range of boards and public bodies. A full list can be found on our website. My Code of Practice is also there at www.publicappointmentsni.org

Making a Complaint

What should you do if, having applied for a public appointment, feel you have not been treated correctly?

I am responsible for investigating complaints about public appointments. I will look at the process used to make an appointment or the way an application was handled. I cannot investigate how a body is run or the actions of its members.

If you feel want to complain you should first raise your concerns with the relevant Department. If, after you have received a reply, you are still unhappy, you can contact me at the address below:

Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland
Dundonald House, Annexe B,
Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, BT4 3SB
Tel: 028 905 24820 Email: info@publicappointmentsni.org

Guidance on Conflicts of Interest and Integrity

As part of the assessment process for a public appointment you will be asked if you know of any possible conflicts of interest in connection with that appointment. Conflicts of interest are not always a barrier to appointment. However both real and perceived conflicts must be explored by the selection panel to ensure that the public can have confidence in the board's independence and impartiality and your position on that board.

To give you an idea of what might constitute a conflict of interest here are a few examples of areas which could lead to real or apparent conflict:

- you are the director of a building firm and the board to which you are seeking appointment conducts regular procurement exercises for building materials – *you could benefit personally from decisions taken by the board*
- you are a manager in a voluntary organisation, whose funding applications are considered by the board to which you are seeking appointment – *the body for which you work could benefit financially from decisions taken by the board*
- you have, in the past, contributed or lent significant funds to the political party to which the appointing Minister belongs – *your appointment could be viewed as a reward for past favours*