



PEACEPLUS

Northern Ireland - Ireland

Co-funded by the



European Union



UK Government



Candidate Booklet

Joint Secretariat Student Placement

Up to 51 Weeks



Special EU Programmes Body
Comhlacht na gClár Speisialta AE
Special EU Schemes Boadie



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FOREWORD

Thank you for your interest in a role with the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

As an organisation, we pride ourselves on recruiting the best people and providing them with the tools and support they need to make a positive contribution to our work, while realising their full potential.

The Special EU Programmes Body is one of six cross-border bodies established under the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. The SEUPB has the statutory remit for managing EU funding programmes within Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland.

For over twenty-five years, SEUPB has played a pivotal role in shaping a more peaceful and prosperous future for our region. Our mission remains as vital today as it was at the start: to foster collaboration, reconciliation, and growth. SEUPB's flagship funding programme, PEACEPLUS, builds on that legacy with a total investment of approximately €1.14 billion, backed by the EU, UK and Irish governments, and the Northern Ireland Executive. This funding supports a wide range of sectors, including health and social care, environmental sustainability, rural regeneration, smart towns and villages, and youth services, while continuing our fundamental work of embedding peace and reconciliation across the region.

The work we do is challenging but also incredibly rewarding, our offices in Belfast, Omagh and Monaghan are a hub of energy and enthusiasm. Our staff value the knowledge that they are making a positive and lasting contribution to society and the world that they live in.

We welcome those who share our vision for a better, more peaceful and more prosperous society and our belief that our combined effort can make that vision a reality.

This booklet will provide you with further information about the key responsibilities of the role you are applying for and sets out the skills and competencies required. We look forward to receiving your application.

Gina McIntyre
Chief Executive
Special EU Programmes Body



INTRODUCTION

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) is one of six North South Bodies established in 1999 as a consequence of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement – an agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The SEUPB has the statutory remit for managing EU funding programmes within Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland, helping to foster peace and prosperity across the region.

For more than 25 years, the SEUPB has managed a number of European Union investment programmes, including the PEACE and INTERREG programmes.

A total of €3.39 billion has been invested through previous programmes, funding over 23,000 projects, and touching the lives of more than two million citizens.

The PEACEPLUS Programme will continue to provide this vital support to Northern Ireland and the border counties with an investment of €1.14 billion focusing on embedding peace and promoting prosperity across the region.

SEUPB Mission Statement:

“Underpinning Peace and Prosperity for People and Places.”

SEUPB Vision Statement:

“Inspiring people. Improving places. Investing in partnerships. Creating sustainable progress through peace and prosperity.”

Our Guiding Principles:

In carrying out our work we will adhere to the following guiding principles:

- **Equality and Respect** – We treat everyone fairly and with dignity, fostering an inclusive environment.
- **Continuous Improvement** – We embrace learning and innovation to enhance our impact.
- **Excellence** – We strive for the highest standards in everything that we do.
- **Accountability** – We are transparent and responsible in our actions and decisions.
- **Integrity** – We act ethically in the best interests of our stakeholders.

KEY REGULATORY FUNCTIONS

The key functions for the SEUPB are set out below:

- 1) To act as the Managing Authority, and First level Control (verification) for the PEACEPLUS programme. The Managing Authority function is a unit which has overall responsibility which involves ensuring the Programme meets all regulatory requirements and supports funded projects to deliver the objectives of the Programme, in partnership with the Joint Secretariat unit.
- 2) Continue implementing the PEACEPLUS Programme, the Managing Authority will work with delivery partners to ensure that PEACEPLUS meets its commitment, spend and outcomes ambition for project delivery.
- 3) The SEUPB's corporate team, with the key functions of Corporate Finance, Accounting Function, HR, Communications, and IT will ensure that the highest standards of public accountability and financial management are adhered to so as to meet the expectations of its many stakeholders.
- 4) The Joint Secretariat (JS) is the main point of contact between applicants seeking funding and selected projects with SEUPB. The JS provides services in relation to project assessment and support to projects. This role of supporting and assisting projects to deliver their objectives is inextricably linked to the Managing Authority role. The JS deals with all aspects of project implementation work. The role of JS in the Programmes is critical, particularly in the early stages as the new projects mobilize. The JS has a continuing significant role to assist funded Lead Partners to complete and deliver their projects effectively.



Overview Student Placement

The SEUPB has student placement opportunities available in IT, Finance, Human Resources, Project Management, Information Governance and Research. We anticipate hiring between 6 and 8 students for a period of 51 weeks.

Open to those who will have completed their second year of undergraduate level study by the end of 2025/26 academic year, the SEUPB recognises that a student placement year forms an integral part of a university degree. As such, a student's professional placement experience should complement their academic study and contribute to their overall development. It's not just about gaining work experience; it's about building the skills, confidence, and perspective to succeed in your future career. A student placement isn't just a step in an academic journey – it's a foundation for your future success.

Our staff are enthusiastic and knowledgeable mentors who are incredibly proud of the student placement roles and the opportunities they create for SEUPB and the employed students. Our previous students have highlighted the importance of mentors who have given them the support to tackle a steep learning curve, the safety to make mistakes and ask questions, allowed them to work on a variety of projects and trusted them with significant responsibilities. The relationships formed at SEUPB can support students throughout future studies.

Our cohort hiring style creates an immediate peer group. This group will find their place amidst a supportive and inclusive work environment, empowered to realise their full potential. Students will be able to build relationships with like-minded peers, attend exclusive events (team dependent), and open doors to future opportunities.

Following advice from universities in recognising the importance of peer-to-peer connections, we have created the framework for a Student Peer Network. This group meets frequently and is entirely student-run. It presents an opportunity to come together without management supervision to collaborate, share their successes, discuss and advise on their challenges and build supportive relationships amongst the group.

Our students will engage actively to develop new and transferable skills, explore workplace practices, and see how their academic experience can be the foundation of a pathway contributing to local and international society.

We hope our student placement role will allow students to explore a potential career path, increase employability skills and position students well for future opportunities.



SUMMARY OF JOB:

This is an excellent opportunity to put classroom learning into practice and undertake meaningful work that directly impacts the lives of our citizens. As a Joint Secretariat Programme Assistant student, you will take an active part in the assessment of applicants and the maintenance and implementation requirements of projects selected or to take part in the PEACEPLUS Programme.

KEY FUNCTIONS:

- Project Management
- Project and Programme Reporting
- Administrative Support.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Assist in the implementation of project and programme delivery
- Assist in the administration and assessment of project applications
- Use the SEUPB digital platforms to extract, report and upload information.
- Assist in the development and delivery of internal, external and online events.
- Collation, monitoring and delivery of status reporting for internal and external teams
- Assist in the delivery of secretariat functions (preparation and dissemination of papers, meeting coordination, email correspondence, note taking, preparing proposals, letters, presentations, document formatting, proofreading, and editing).
- General office administration
- Maintain and coordinate team risk and reporting logs, monthly JS reporting pack
- Assist in the coordination, delivery and response to internal and external information requests

The above is given as a broad range of duties and is not intended to be a complete description of the job role.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: Joint Secretariat Programme Assistant Student Placement

DURATION: Up to 51 weeks

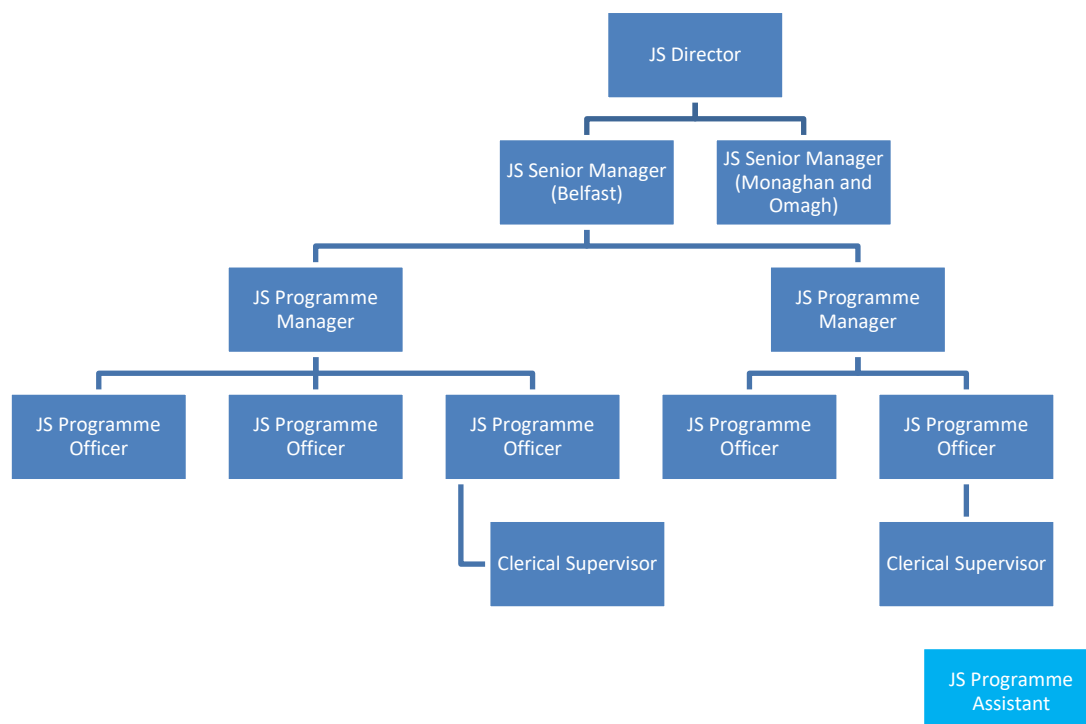
HOURS: 37 hours per week

SALARY SCALE: £25,796

REPORTS TO: Joint Secretariat Programme Manager.

ORGANISATIONAL STURCTURE:

The SEUPB has a Chief Executive, appointed by the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC). The Chief Executive is responsible for managing the organisation under the direction of the NSMC. The Joint Secretariat is one of 3 SEUPB directorates (Corporate Services and Managing Authority being the other 2). The Joint Secretariat directorate is split between offices in Belfast, Monaghan and Omagh. This post is based in Belfast.





LOCATION:

The successful candidate will be based at the Clarence West Building, Clarence West Street, Belfast BT2 7GP.

The postholder may be required to travel throughout Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland and beyond to attend meetings/conferences which may include overnight stays on occasion. The successful candidate must be prepared to travel and stay away from home overnight as and when required in order to properly perform the duties and responsibilities of the post.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA and QUALIFICATIONS:

Applications will be submitted through GetGot, applicants must provide information detailing previous work history, educational background and answer questions regarding their experience and future goals.

The placement is designed for students on sandwich courses* and is open to all individuals who meet the criteria set out below.

*Sandwich courses are usually courses which include a year of work experience 'sandwiched' between two or three years of concentrated study. During this year the student usually gets relevant work experience with an employer or organisation.

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications:

1. Be students **currently** studying for **either** a Higher National Diploma **or** Degree in a relevant subject area, e.g., Public Administration, Business Studies, Business Administration, Business Management - evidencing strong project management skills in their application

AND

2. Have the opportunity to undertake a one-year placement for the 2026/2027 academic year.

OR

3. Open University students must have completed at least 240 credits before starting their placement in September 2026. Students who will finish their degree on or before 2026 are not eligible to apply.

Candidates will only be appointed if confirmation is obtained from the college/university that they are required to return and complete their course.

REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

The selection panels will design questions to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in each of the key competency areas and award marks accordingly. The selection process will include a competency-based interview.



A competency-based interview requires you to:

- In your responses, focus on your ability to fulfil the competencies required for effective performance in the role; and
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

In preparation for the interview, you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:

- Situation – briefly outline the situation.
- Task – what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve.
- Action – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution.
- Result – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience to demonstrate the range of behaviours associated with the competences being assessed. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work / life experiences.

The competencies are outlined below:

Seeing the Big Picture

Seeing the big picture is about having an in-depth understanding and knowledge of how your role fits with, and supports, organisational objectives and the wider public needs. For all staff, it is about focusing your contribution on the activities which will meet Departmental and Programme for Government goals and deliver the greatest value. At senior levels, it is about understanding the political context and taking account of wider impacts, including the broader legislative agenda, to develop long term implementation strategies that maximise opportunities to add value to the citizen, support economic, sustainable growth and help to deliver the Northern Ireland Executive's priorities.

Changing and Improving

People who are effective in this area are responsive, innovative and seek out opportunities to create effective change. For all staff, it is about being open to change, suggesting ideas for improvements to the way things are done, and working in 'smarter', more focused ways. At senior levels, this is about creating and contributing to a culture of innovation and allowing people to consider and take managed risks. Doing this well means continuously seeking out ways to improve policy development and implementation and building a more flexible and responsive Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS). It also means making use of alternative delivery models including digital and shared service approaches where possible.



Making Effective Decisions

Effectiveness in this area is about being objective, using sound judgement, evidence and knowledge to provide accurate, expert and professional advice. For all staff, it means showing clarity of thought, setting priorities, analysing and using evidence to evaluate options before arriving at well-reasoned, justifiable decisions. At senior levels, leaders will be creating evidence-based strategies, evaluating options, impacts, risks and solutions. They will aim to maximise return while minimising risk and to balance political, legislative, social, financial, economic and environmental considerations to provide sustainable outcomes.

Leading and Communicating

At all levels, effectiveness in this area is about leading from the front and communicating with clarity, conviction and enthusiasm. It is about supporting principles of fairness of opportunity for all and a dedication to a diverse range of citizens. At senior levels, it is about establishing a strong direction and a persuasive future vision, managing and engaging with people with honesty and integrity, and upholding the reputation of the Department and the NICS.

Collaborating and Partnering

People skilled in this area create and maintain positive, professional and trusting working relationships with a wide range of people within and outside the NICS, to help to achieve business objectives and goals. At all levels, it requires working collaboratively, sharing information and building supportive, responsive relationships with colleagues and stakeholders, whilst having the confidence to challenge assumptions. At senior levels, it is about delivering business objectives through creating an inclusive environment, encouraging collaboration which may cut across departmental, organisational and wider boundaries. It requires the ability to build constructive partnerships and effective relationships with Ministers and their Special Advisers.

Building Capability for All

Effectiveness in this area is having a strong focus on continuous learning for oneself, others and the organisation. For all staff, it is about being open to learning and keeping their knowledge and skill set current and evolving. At senior levels, it is about ensuring a diverse blend of capability and skills is identified and developed to meet current and future business needs. It is also about creating a learning and knowledge culture across all levels in the organisation to inform future plans and transformational change.

Delivering Value for Money

Delivering value for money involves the efficient, effective and economic use of taxpayers' money in the delivery of public services. For all staff, it means seeking out



and implementing solutions which achieve a good mix of quality and effectiveness for the least outlay, thus reducing the risk of fraud and error. People who do this well base their decisions on evidenced information and follow agreed processes and policies, challenging these appropriately where they appear to prevent good value for money. At senior levels, effective people embed a culture of value for money within their area/function. They work collaboratively across boundaries to ensure that the NICS maximises its strategic outcomes within the resources available.

Managing a Quality Service

Effectiveness in this area is about being organised to deliver service objectives and striving to improve the quality of service, taking account of diverse customer needs and requirements. People who are effective plan, organise and manage their time and activities to deliver a high quality and efficient service, applying programme and project management approaches appropriately and effectively to support service delivery. At senior levels, it is about creating an environment to deliver operational excellence and creating the most appropriate and cost-effective delivery models for public services.

Delivering at Pace

Effectiveness in this area means focusing on delivering timely performance with energy and taking responsibility and accountability for quality outcomes. For all staff, it is about working to agreed goals and activities and dealing with challenges in a responsive and constructive way. At senior levels, it is about building a performance culture to deliver outcomes with a firm focus on prioritisation and addressing performance issues resolutely, fairly and promptly. It is also about leaders providing the focus and energy to drive activities forward through others and encourage staff to perform effectively during challenging and changing times.

Achieving Outcomes through Delivery Partners

Being effective in this area is about maintaining an economic, long-term focus in all activities. For all, it is about having a commercial, financial and sustainable mindset to ensure all activities and services are delivering added value and working to stimulate economic growth. At senior levels, it is about identifying economic, market and customer issues and using these to promote innovative business models, delivery partnerships and agreements to deliver greatest value; and ensuring tight controls of finances, resources and contracts to meet strategic priorities.



WHAT WE OFFER

Blended (Hybrid) Working

SEUPB offers a blended working arrangement based on three days in the office and two days homeworking per week. This facility will be applicable to this role after two months, following full completion of onboarding, training, and familiarisation.

Financial

To attract, motivate and retain talented people we believe an attractive, flexible and rewarding pay structure is essential. (We therefore offer our employees competitive salaries).

Pension

The SEUPB operates a defined benefit occupational pension scheme (the North South Pension Scheme) worked out on a Career Average basis.

We have outlined some of the key features of the Scheme below.

Generous pension payable for life after you retire which increases in line with inflation*

The pension amount is based on your average salary during your career and the number of years you spend in employment.

The best way to think about the value of the pension is to estimate how much you might have to save to get an equivalent pension privately via another pension scheme. For illustration purposes, as a % of your pay, the cost of an equivalent pension might be up to 40% of pay per year. This annual cost increases with age (i.e. the older you are the greater the % of pay it costs to pay for your pension). So, you'd have to put a significant proportion of your earned income aside to secure such a pension.

As it turns out, typically you are required to make a contribution of between 4.6% and 7.35% of pay per year, with the balance effectively funded by the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish government. There are other benefits payable too to provide protection to you and any beneficiaries in the event of illness or death.

*Inflation is measured by an index known as the Consumer Price Index (CPI) which measures changes in the price level of a weighted average market basket of consumer goods and services purchased by households.



Holidays NI

We offer our staff an annual leave entitlement of 25 days rising to 30 days after 5 years' service. In addition to this we also offer 12 statutory holiday days.

Employment Policies

The SEUPB recognises the importance of work life balance and offers a range of family-friendly policies and practices for its employees.

Learning and Development

All employees will have access to the SEUPB Employee Support & Development Programme. The SEUPB has a dedicated Learning and Development Strategy in which we provide our employees with the training they need to be as efficient and productive while also offering development opportunities to further develop their career in the SEUPB.

Family Leave

Maternity Leave – Up to 52 weeks of which 18 weeks is on full pay. We also offer Paternity Leave, Parental Leave/Shared Parental Leave and Adoption Leave.

Employee Assistance Programme

All our employees have access to a fully independent 24-hour helpline to assist with any of life's issues or problems, along with access to an accredited counselling service. (All of which is free at the point of use and completely confidential).

Location

The SEUPB Headquarters is located in Belfast with two Regional Offices in Monaghan and Omagh.

Networking Opportunities

Networking is more than just meeting people – it's about forming connections that can support both personal and career growth. You will build relationships with like-minded peers, attend exclusive events (team dependent), and open doors to future opportunities. Building your network is an investment in your future. These relationships can support you throughout your studies. At SEUPB, take advantage of the opportunity to connect, learn and grow with others who share a passion for success.

Professional and personal growth

When participating in a student placement you will build the skills, confidence, and perspective to succeed in your future career. This placement programme gives you independence and accountability, where you can learn to manage your own tasks, deadlines, and goals. You will increase your confidence, taking on responsibilities and challenges pushing you out of your comfort zone. It will give you motivation and direction, leaving you feeling inspired and energised about your future after seeing the possibilities of your career firsthand.



THE SELECTION PROCESS

Eligibility Sift

Shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application.

COMPETENCY APPLICATION FORM GUIDANCE

Personal Details

Enter your title, name, preferred name to be addressed by and address on the front page of the application form.

We may contact you by email or by telephone, therefore include an up-to-date telephone number and email address that we can contact you on. We issue notifications by email, so check your email regularly if you have applied for a job with us.

Education and Qualifications

Use this section to show us that you have the necessary qualifications and any professional memberships to do the job. Ensure you read the Person Specification when completing this section.

List all the academic institutions you've attended in this section. Include the name of the institution, the courses you took and any qualifications you received.

If you are applying for a job on the basis of a qualification which is not specifically detailed in the person specification, but which you consider to be a relevant equivalent qualification, you must highlight the areas or modules which you think are relevant. This will enable the panel to decide if it is an equivalent qualification. If you don't provide details on the equivalency of your qualification, the panel may not consider your application any further.

Employment History

Complete the current employment box if you are currently working. This does not only apply to paid work, so include any voluntary work or work experience placements that you have done or are doing at the moment.

Include the companies that are most relevant to the position you are currently applying for. If you have gaps in your employment, explain them. Show how you increased your skills, perhaps through volunteering, and any courses you've completed.

We require the exact dates of your employment history as these are used for short-listing purposes.



Application Questions

This section of the application form is very important. It is your opportunity to tell us about yourself, what you can do, and the skills and experience that make you a strong candidate for this placement. You should also explain why you would like to complete your placement with the SEUPB.

When answering the questions, make sure you clearly demonstrate how you meet the essential criteria outlined in the person specification. Please confirm that you will have completed the second year of your course by the end of the 2025/26 academic year and that you are eligible to undertake a placement year. Include details of the school or university you attend, your course, and any relevant work or projects associated with it.

The selection panel will only consider the information provided in the relevant sections of the application form. If you include important details in the wrong section, they may not be taken into account. We will not make assumptions about your abilities, so do not leave out any relevant skills, knowledge, or experience, even voluntary or unpaid work is important.

You are asked to provide personal and specific examples to demonstrate your experience. This means describing situations you have personally been involved in, explaining what you did, how you approached the situation, and what the outcome was. Use examples that show the breadth of your experience. Please ensure that your answers do not include any personal or identifying information.

The decision to invite you to the next stage of the selection process will be based solely on the information you provide in your application form and how well it matches the criteria in the person specification.

Good Example Answers

To demonstrate your personal involvement, you should use 'I', not 'we', when completing your application form. Using 'I' portrays your personal involvement more and lets the panel know exactly what your personal involvement was and what you were personally responsible for doing. 'We' gives the impression that you did not personally undertake the duties or that you were somehow involved but didn't really have ownership or responsibility for the experience – it does not tell the panel about your personal experience, only that of a team or the organisation. It is evidence of your individual personal experience that the panel is looking for.

You want to customise your responses on each job application form you fill out. It is tempting to copy and paste responses in multiple job applications, but this will not create a strong application. Use relevant terminology and phrases that are unique to



the industry and will catch the eye of the reader. Tailor your work experience, references, and answers to each job.

Check the word count. Writing too little suggests you have underestimated the importance of the cover letter and have not included enough relevant detail. You should provide specific detail of your experience, that is, how you went about gaining the experience, what you did, what this involved and provide examples which demonstrate the breadth of your experience.

Double check the spelling and grammar and formatting before submitting your application.

Use the STAR method.

The STAR method is a way to keep your answers concise, clear, and full of relevant details. STAR stands for Situation, Task, Action, Result. It is useful for job applications when answering role-based questions about previous experiences. Using the STAR method can help you explain what you learned from previous situations and how you will apply the skills you gained to a new position. It's important to thoroughly proofread your application to find any grammatical errors, misspelt words, or confusing language. Use key phrases that will catch the reader's eye and show that you understand the job specifications.

It is helpful to have someone else read your application and letter, as another perspective can find mistakes you might miss.

Shortlisting

The first stage in the selection process will be to conduct a sift of completed application forms against the essential qualification criteria. Applicants who have not fully demonstrated on their application form how they meet this criterion will not be progressed to the next stage of the process. The onus will be on applicants who are completing application forms to demonstrate how they meet each competency.

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications considered by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated above. If putting forward an equivalent qualification, please provide the type of qualification and date awarded. The date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body. If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc. so that a well-informed decision can be made.

Should the SEUPB receive a high level of applications, the desirable criteria may be applied to shortlist candidates for interview.



At the Interview

Those candidates called for interview will be questioned on the areas covered in the application form, personnel specification, and job description. Candidates will be asked questions to enable them to illustrate their competence in each of the areas. They may enlarge upon the information provided on the application form or use different information to illustrate the answer. Candidates will be assessed against the essential criteria and key competencies identified as being a requirement for the role.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Applicants should note that starting salary would normally be at the minimum of the pay scale.

Applicants who intend to return their applications by post should ensure that they post documents in sufficient time to reach us by the closing date.

Late applications will not be accepted under any circumstances. We will accept application forms by either post or electronically by the closing date and time. It is your responsibility to ensure applications reach us by the notified deadline.

EQUALITY STATEMENT

SEUPB is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from suitably qualified candidates irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, race, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or whether or not they have dependants.

The Body would particularly welcome applications from the Protestant community who are currently under-represented in the workforce.