

Trainee Solicitor Scheme

Candidate Information Booklet



Attorney General
for Northern Ireland



**Office of the Attorney General Northern Ireland
(AGNI)**

Trainee Solicitor Scheme

Office of the Attorney General Northern Ireland (AGNI)

SALARY – £24,454.04 per annum

Completed application forms must be submitted no later than 12 noon (UK time) on **Friday 12 June 2026**.

Please retain a copy of this booklet for your reference throughout the selection process.

Contents

<u>Foreword.....</u>	<u>Page 1</u>
<u>Our Organisation.....</u>	<u>Page 2</u>
<u>The Role.....</u>	<u>Page 4</u>
<u>Terms and Conditions.....</u>	<u>Page 6</u>
<u>Selection Process.....</u>	<u>Page 9</u>
<u>Guidance for Applicants.....</u>	<u>Page 13</u>
<u>General Information.....</u>	<u>Page 15</u>

FOREWORD

The Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland is pleased to invite applications for our Trainee Solicitor programme — an opportunity to begin a rewarding legal career within a small, dedicated, and highly professional team at the heart of public service.

As a trainee solicitor, you will play a valuable role in supporting the Attorney General and her staff in the discharge of important legal functions. This is a unique opportunity to gain insight into the operation of law at the highest level, contributing to work that underpins the rule of law and serves the wider public interest in Northern Ireland.

We are committed to providing a supportive and enriching environment in which you can develop both professionally and personally. Through a structured training programme, you will gain high-quality legal experience across a diverse range of work. You will benefit from close mentoring by experienced legal professionals, enabling you to build confidence, deepen your

legal knowledge, and develop practical skills essential for a successful career in law.

This scheme offers more than technical training. It provides exposure to complex and engaging legal issues, opportunities to collaborate with colleagues across the legal system, and the chance to develop professional networks that will support your future career. Above all, it offers the opportunity to contribute to work that has a genuine and lasting impact on society.

Please note that this opportunity is a training placement only, and a permanent position will not be offered at the end of the training period.

We are looking for motivated, capable individuals who are committed to excellence, integrity, and public service. If you are ready to take the first step in your legal career and make a real difference, we encourage you to apply.

OUR ORGANISATION

The Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland

The Justice (NI) Act 2002 provides for the appointment of an independent, non-political Attorney General for Northern Ireland.

The Attorney General has a range of statutory and non-statutory responsibilities including as chief legal adviser to the Executive. The Attorney General deals with the most important and complex legal matters facing the Executive and Departments, providing advice and where necessary conducting litigation.

The Attorney may ask the UK Supreme Court to determine whether a provision of legislation is within the NI Assembly's legislative competence and is a notice party in devolution litigation.

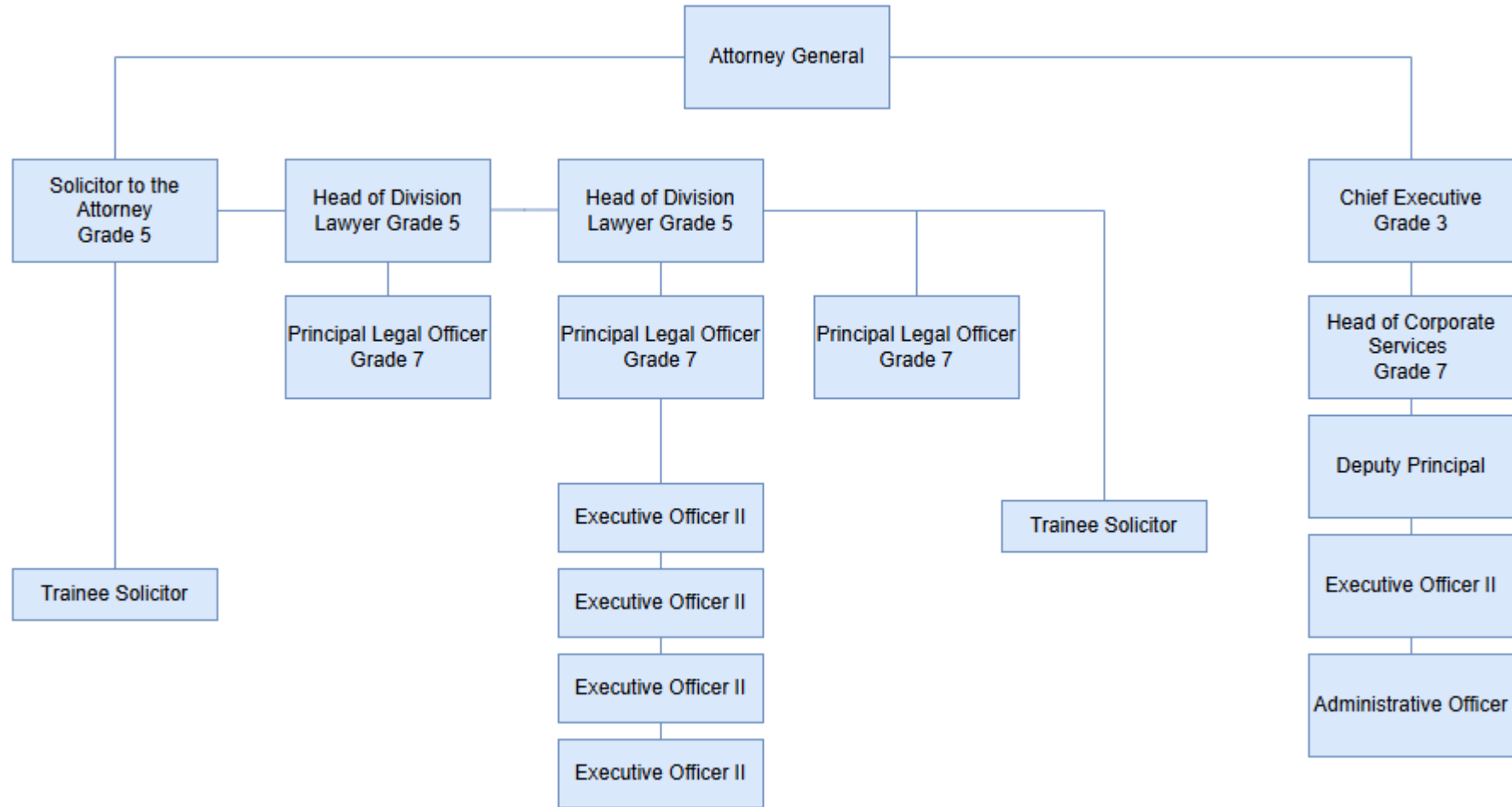
Other responsibilities of the Attorney include considering notifications under the Mental Capacity Act (Northern Ireland) 2016; representing the public interest in charity matters; ordering fresh inquests; and issuing human rights guidance to criminal justice organisations.

A complete list of the Attorney General's functions can be found on our website www.attorneygeneralni.gov.uk

To guarantee the independence of the Attorney, her Office has an arm's length relationship with the Executive Office.



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND – ORGANISATIONAL CHART



THE ROLE

Job Description

The Trainee Solicitor Scheme provides an opportunity for



aspiring solicitors to develop their legal knowledge, practical skills and professional experience within a dynamic public sector legal environment. Working within the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland, trainees will gain experience across a range of legal areas while contributing to work that supports the administration of justice and serves the public interest.

The role offers structured learning and development, supported by experienced legal professionals, enabling trainees to develop the knowledge, competencies and behaviours required to qualify as a solicitor.

Key responsibilities:

- Support legal teams in the delivery of high-quality legal advice and services.
- Undertake legal research and analysis on a range of issues relevant to the work of the Office.
- Assist with drafting legal documents, briefing papers, correspondence and other written material.
- Support the preparation of cases, meetings and legal proceedings where appropriate.
- Develop an understanding of public law, government processes and the wider legal framework within which the Office operates.



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- Build effective working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders.
 - Participate fully in structured learning, development activities and professional training requirements.
 - Demonstrate a commitment to integrity, professionalism and the highest ethical standards expected within public service.

This above list is not exhaustive but gives a good indication of the main duties of the post. The emphasis on particular duties will vary over time according to business needs.





TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Attorney General for Northern Ireland is offering a solicitor traineeship. The

successful candidate will be contracted to undertake a 2-year traineeship* within the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland.

[*Note – the formal 2-year trainee solicitor programme starts on the 1st September 2026]

This is a temporary fixed term positions for a trainee solicitor participating in the Trainee Solicitor programme in Northern Ireland run by the Institute of Professional Legal Studies (IPLS) in conjunction with the Law Society.

Remuneration

The total remuneration for the trainee will be £24,454.04 per annum (pensionable).

Institute Fees

The Office of the Attorney General will pay 50% of the tuition fees for the successful candidate. The successful candidate must sign a Certificate of Understanding requiring them to repay the tuition fees in the event that they fail to complete the training programme.

Location

The successful candidate's base location is at the Belfast City Centre offices of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland.

Appointment

The successful candidates will be contracted to undertake a 2-year training contract within OAGNI with a starting date of **Tuesday 1 September 2026**. A permanent position will not be offered at the end of the training programme.

Pensions

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pension package. Further details can be found on the Civil Service Pensions (Northern Ireland) website at:

www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni.

Training

The Attorney General will appoint a Master from within her office on behalf of the successful candidate, and as part of the training contract the trainee will be required to comply with the agreed Training Schedule at the Institute of Professional Legal Studies.

Performance will be monitored, and continuation of the traineeship will be dependent on satisfactory completion of all aspects of the training programme.

Holidays

Annual leave allowance will be 28 days (inclusive of public and privilege holidays).

Hours of Work

During the periods of in-office training, normal hours of work are full-time: 42 hours per week, which includes a 1-hour daily meal break (37 hours net) Monday to Friday. The trainee solicitors shall be expected to report for work when not attending the IPLS.

Vetting

An appointment will be dependent on the individual satisfying the vetting requirements for the post. The vetting clearance requirement is a **Basic AccessNI check followed by a Counter Terrorist Check (CTC)**.



Successful candidates will only receive an application for CTC when they have successfully completed their Basic AccessNI check.

Further Information

If you wish to learn more about the training contract before deciding to apply, you may contact the following:

- contact@attorneygeneralni.gov.uk



SELECTION PROCESS



The selection process will involve 3 stages:

(I) Eligibility

In order to be considered for this training opportunity, applicants must, by noon of Friday 12th June 2026 (the closing date for e-mail applications) hold an offer (including the wait list) from the Institute and be provisionally accepted for a place within the solicitors' course.

Applicants should note that a scanned /photographed copy of their result letter from the Institute **must** be enclosed with their e-mailed application form. Application forms received without a copy of the letter enclosed will not be considered.

(II) Sift

The second selection stage will be a case analysis in the form of a memo.

Please attach your memo to your e-mail application form

Please read the decision of the Supreme Court *JR123* [2025] UKSC 8 (available at [In the matter of an application for Judicial Review by JR123 \(Appellant\) \(Northern Ireland\) - UK Supreme Court](#)). Please draft a memo, as if to colleagues covering the following:

- 1) Identify a point in the judgment with which you agree or disagree, set it out and explain your view.
- 2) Based only on the judgment, set out what you consider to be the impact of the judgment in its factual context and more broadly.
- 3) Any learning points you have taken from the judgment which might be of use to yourself and others in future advice you give.

Your answer should be in **size 12 font** and should not exceed **1000 words in total**.

There is an equal weighting of marks available for each section above as well as marks for overall structure, presentation, referencing and writing.

The analysis must be your original work, references to the work of others should be indicated in the text and cited by footnotes. **Plagiarism or use of AI will result in removal from the appointment process.** This written exercise will be anonymously reviewed and used to identify the candidates who will be invited to attend for interview.

(III) Final Selection

The final selection stage will be in 2 parts: (i) a short exercise; and (ii) an interview.

(i) Short Exercise

Candidates will be advised of the exercise topic when they report for interview. Candidates will be given a maximum of 30 minutes to consider the information provided and to prepare answers to the questions to be asked.

No personal documentation may be brought into the pre-interview room. Candidates will be allowed to bring some short speaking notes into the interview room for assistance during the interview. No other materials or visual aids will be permitted.

Marks available for the Exercise: 30



(ii) Interview

Once candidates complete the exercise they will be invited to the interview. The interview panel will

ask candidates to present their answers to the exercise and may ask further questions on the topic under discussion.

The following areas will also be assessed at interview with questions designed to test your knowledge and experience in each area and award marks accordingly.



1. Making Effective Decisions.

Effectiveness in this area is about being objective, using sound judgement, and knowledge to provide accurate, expert and professional advice. It means showing clarity of thought, setting priorities, analysing and using evidence to evaluate options before arriving at well-reasoned, justifiable decisions.

Marks available: 30

2. 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.

Marks available: 20

3. 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.

Marks available: 20

Total marks available: 100

Please note the guidance on interview preparation detailed below.

Interviews

It is anticipated that interviews for this post will take place in person in Belfast on **week commencing 29 June 2026**.

Candidates must make themselves available on this date.

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

Applications forms

Only e-mailed applications will be accepted. The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria. All parts of the application form must be completed by the applicant and a scanned copy/photograph of the result letter from the Institute enclosed before this application can be considered. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.



Please note:

- Except for the shortlisting analysis and a copy of the Institute result letter, we will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms.

- All applications must be submitted by the advertised closing date and time.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- Applications will not be examined until after the closing deadline.
- Once your application has been submitted the opportunity to edit will no longer be available.
- You will receive an acknowledgement email. Please contact the Office of the Attorney at contact@attorneygeneralni.gov.uk if you do not receive an acknowledgment email within two working days of the closing date of this competition.

Interview Preparation



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 with the associated areas 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 area. You may draw examples from any area of your study / work / life experiences.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Merit Principle

In accordance with the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code, appointments are made under the 'merit principle,' where the best person for any given post is selected in fair and open competition.

Further information on the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at www.nicscommissioners.org

Guaranteed Interview Scheme

As part of the NICS commitment to the employment of disabled people, we operate a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS). The GIS does not guarantee an appointment. However, its objective is to ensure a guaranteed number of disabled applicants, who meet the minimum essential eligibility criteria for the role they have applied for, are offered an interview.

Click on the links below to read the NICS policy and FAQs on the Guaranteed Interview Scheme.

[Guaranteed Interview Scheme Policy](#)

[Guaranteed Interview Scheme FAQs](#)

Offers of Appointment

Candidates will only receive one offer of appointment which, if not accepted, will result in withdrawal from the competition.

Changes in personal circumstances and contact details

Please ensure the Office of the Attorney General is informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances. It is important that contact details are up to date. **If your email address changes, then it is your responsibility to inform the Office of the Attorney General.**

Transgender Requirements

Should you currently be going through a phase of transition in respect of gender and wish this to be taken into consideration,

in confidence, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process please contact the Office of the Attorney General. Details of this will only be used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

Disability Requirements

We will ask on the application form if you require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability or underlying condition, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process. Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process. If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability and are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider necessary in order for you to take up an appointment. If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further, please contact the Office of the Attorney General.

Right to Work and Nationality Requirements

There are no nationality restrictions on this post: however, before an offer of appointment can be made to an overseas candidate, the Office of the Attorney General will need to ensure that all UK visa and immigration requirements are met.

Security

For this post the level of vetting is a Counter Terrorist Check. For this check you will be required to complete an on-line process.

Further information regarding the Counter Terrorist Check is available via www.gov.uk

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.

Feedback

The Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland is committed to ensuring that the processes used to recruit and select staff are fair and in accordance with the principles of the Civil Service Commissioners Code. We are consequently committed to providing feedback in respect of decisions taken in determining eligibility/shortlisting as well as at interview. Feedback will be provided to candidates on request.

**THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**