

## St Mary's University College

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **What does St Mary's University College do?**

St Mary's is a small, specialist and distinctive institution that is highly focused on its mission; it is high performing and has an international outlook. It enjoys an excellent partnership with Queen's University Belfast, whereby the College is autonomous but, at the same time, has a close relationship of collaborative academic provision. In that regard St Mary's offers two undergraduate programmes, the BEd (Hons) in Teacher Education and the BA (Hons) in Liberal Arts. The BEd (Hons) has an Irish-medium pathway. The College also offers part-time Masters-level programmes and a full-time MSc in Physical Education and Sport for Young People.

#### **What is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB)?**

An NDPB is a body established by statute to deliver a particular public service and which is overseen by a Board rather than Ministers. It employs its own staff and manages its own budget.

#### **How is this appointment regulated?**

The Board oversees performance and strategic direction. The Board is also responsible for ensuring the highest standards of corporate governance, efficiency, and propriety in the use of public funds.

#### **Is St Mary's University College a regulated body?**

This appointment is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, Northern Ireland (CPANI) and the competition may be examined by CPANI for compliance with the Commissioners' Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies.

This means that it will be based on merit after a fair, open, and transparent process that involves independent scrutiny, with the Minister for the Department for the Economy making the final decision on whom to appoint.

#### **How do I apply – can I apply online?**

Yes, you can complete an online application form by using the following link:-

[Department for the Economy - public appointments](#)

Alternatively, you can request a hardcopy pack from the DfE Public Appointments Unit (PAU) at

[pau@economy-ni.gov.uk](mailto:pau@economy-ni.gov.uk) or by telephone:

Janet McCrum on 028 90529492 (Text Relay: 18001 028 90529492).

Written applications can be posted to DfE, Public Appointments Unit, Adelaide House, 39-49 Adelaide Street, Belfast, BT2 8FE.

**The closing date is Noon (BST) on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024. Late applications will not be accepted (except in exceptional circumstances).**

**Do I need to complete all sections of the application form?**

Yes - all sections of the application form must be completed to the best of your ability.

Applicants are expected to demonstrate their **personal** ability to meet the criteria by way of practical examples. The Selection Panel will reach a decision on whether you meet each of the criteria on the basis of the evidence you supply. It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities. The Panel will not make assumptions from the title of your post or the nature of the organisation, as to the skills and experience gained, so the onus is on you to provide sufficiently detailed examples to demonstrate that you have the experience of putting into use the competences that are needed for the post.

**Can I send you my CV?**

The public appointment process does not permit CVs as a form of application. You must complete the application form.

**Do you require any professional/academic qualifications?**

No specific academic qualifications are required for this appointment.

**Am I too young/too old?**

There's no upper age limit - DfE public appointments are open to applicants on the basis of ability.

**How can I find out more about the public appointment process?**

Please contact DfE PAU by email at [pau@economy-ni.gov.uk](mailto:pau@economy-ni.gov.uk) or telephone Janet McCrum on 028 90529492 (Text Relay: 18001 028 90529492).

**How can I find out more about the role?**

For further information about the post, please Email:  
[he.qualityandgovernance@economy-ni.gov.uk](mailto:he.qualityandgovernance@economy-ni.gov.uk)

**I am already working in the public sector – can I still apply?**

Applicants who already work in the public sector need to be aware that: if appointed, they will be asked to obtain confirmation from their employer that any remuneration due and time worked for this position are truly additional to their existing job role and is not a duplication with salaried employment (unless allowed under the terms and conditions of employment). In the interests of minimising the potential for double paying to occur the Department reserves the right to contact your employer regarding your candidature.

**As a former civil servant am I still eligible?**

Former civil servants are subject to rules on the Acceptance of Outside Business Appointments, Employment or Self-Employment for a period of up to two years after leaving the NI Civil Service. Individuals in this category who wish to apply should check their eligibility to do so with the HR Branch of their former Department.

**Does an actual/perceived Conflict of Interest disqualify me from Board membership?**

The Department must take account of actual, or perceived, conflicts of interest. Therefore applicants, in their application form, must disclose information or personal connections which, if they were to be appointed, could lead to a conflict of interest or

be perceived as such. Conflicts of interest may not be a barrier to appointment but both real and perceived conflicts must be discussed with all candidates by the Selection Panel. This is to ensure that the public can have confidence in the Board's independence and impartiality and the integrity of the potential appointees. For further information please read paragraphs 8 & 9 of the Information Pack and the Annex referred to therein.

### **Right to work in the UK**

DfE have no public appointments that are restricted to UK nationals only. However, there is a mandatory requirement to ensure that those appointed do not contravene immigration legislation.

- Republic of Ireland (RoI) citizens may be appointed to any post.
- Commonwealth citizens who have immigration status allowing them to work in the UK may be appointed to any post.
- There is an onus on non-UK and non-RoI citizens to provide proof of their right to work in the UK and an onus on the appointer to check that.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of the individual to provide evidence that they have the appropriate permission if being offered a post. The Department will check the individual's passport, share code or other documents to confirm if they can legally work in the UK.

### **How does the interview process work? What is the selection process?**

The selection panel have decided upon an anonymised sift and short-listing process for this competition.

When assessing each application against the essential criteria, panel members will use a Marking Frame to determine how an applicant's skills, knowledge, experience and qualities meet the criteria. Applications which do not meet all of the essential criteria will be sifted out.

If the Department receives a high number of applications which meet the selection criteria, the Panel reserves the right to apply a scoring system to further short-list for interview, based on the quality of evidence provided. **No applicant names will be given at this stage of the process.**

### **How long will the selection process take?**

The sift and short-listing process will take place mid November 2024. It is anticipated that interviews will take place in early December 2024. The outcome of the competition will be made known by early February 2025.

### **I am a disabled candidate - how do I get reasonable adjustments for my interview?**

For this competition we are using the Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS), whereby we guarantee to interview any disabled applicant whose application meets or exceeds the minimum requirement for the post. Their application will not be subjected to any short-listing which may take place. The aim of the GIS is to provide applicants with a disability the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities beyond the initial application stage.

If called for interview and you have a disability requiring any reasonable adjustments or specific access needs, please email DfE PAU at [pau@economy-ni.gov.uk](mailto:pau@economy-ni.gov.uk) and we will be happy to discuss these with you.

**If I am unsuccessful, can you give me feedback?**

All those sifted out or short-listed out will be provided with feedback based on the agreed Panel's assessment of their application. If an applicant wishes to contest the decision not to short-list them for interview, they should do so within 5 working days of receipt of their feedback letter. Further details about the process will be provided in the letter.

**Are there any checks I need to go through before being appointed?**

For the Department's consideration, applicants are asked to declare in the application form if they have been convicted of any offence (other than minor motoring offences) which are not spent in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978 or if any charges are outstanding.

Individuals who are disqualified from holding Company Directorship either through an Order or an Undertaking, who are bankrupt or who are the subject of a Bankruptcy Restrictions Order, are not eligible for consideration.

Before a decision is made on whom to appoint, a Company Director's disqualification check and a bankruptcy check will be carried out. In addition, a cross-departmental check will be carried out on the probity and performance of those candidates who currently hold or have held public appointment roles.

**Will I get training?**

Yes - New Board Members will be required to attend induction training and relevant training courses. All members of the Board are supported with additional development needs or training as necessary.

**How do I find out about other public appointment opportunities?**

Register with us at [pau@economy-ni.gov.uk](mailto:pau@economy-ni.gov.uk) or telephone Janet McCrum on 028 90529492 (Text Relay: 18001 028 90529492). For a list of current vacancies/competitions throughout the Northern Ireland Civil Service please visit [Public appointment vacancies](#)