

Appointment of NRS Non-Executive Directors

Guidance Notes and Role Description for Applicants

June 2019

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Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in becoming an NRS Non Executive Director.

National Records of Scotland (NRS) performs the registration and statistical functions of the Registrar General for Scotland and the archival functions of the Keeper of the Records of Scotland, including maintaining the archives as one of Scotland's five National Collections.

We hold [records](#) spanning the 12th to the 21st centuries, touching on virtually every aspect of Scottish life. We are the repository for the public and legal records of Scotland but we also have many local and private archives. We hold and make available one of the most varied collections of records in Britain. We provide a leadership role for archive and record professionals, and require 250 named public authorities to submit records management plans under [the Public Records \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#) for agreement by the Keeper.

We administer the [registration](#) of life events such as births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships, divorces and adoptions. We are also responsible for the statutes relating to the formalities of marriage and civil partnership and the conduct of civil marriage.

We have a global audience for our work. Genealogists researching their Scots ancestry can access our records online at [ScotlandsPeople](#) or as part of a visit to Scotland at our ScotlandsPeople Centre in General Register House. The [Scottish Register of Tartans](#) attracts worldwide interest.

We prepare and publish regular [demographic statistics](#). These statistics play a vital part in underpinning decision making from national to local level, and are a building block in the development of a large number of economic and social statistics.

We take the census of Scotland's population every 10 years and are in the process of a major programme to deliver the census in 2021.

Being an NRS NXD will be a stimulating and rewarding experience, and the next few years even more so as we work to deliver the Census.

Should you decide that you are able to contribute to our work, I hope you apply and I wish you well with your application.

Paul Lowe
Chief Executive

Please read these notes carefully before completing your application form.

Contents

1. The Audit and Risk Committee.....	4
2. The Strategic Board	4
3. About National Records of Scotland (NRS)	5
4. NRS Corporate Governance.....	5
5. Application Guidance and Selection Process.....	5
6. Completing Your Application	5
7. Fit and Proper Person Tests.....	6
8. How we will handle your application	7
9. Appointment Round Timetable.....	8
10. Nationality/Disqualifications.....	8
11. Equality and Diversity.....	9
12. Effect on existing benefits you may receive currently	9
13. Postage	9
14. Interviews/Expenses	9
15. Publicising Appointments.....	9
16. Disclosure Certificate	10
17. Complaints	10
18. Code of Practice	10
19. Selection Panel.....	10
20. Support and Development	10
21. Appraisal.....	11
22. Time Commitment	11
23. Location of Meetings	11
24. Length of appointment	11
25. Remuneration.....	11
26. Annex A The Nine Principles of Public Life	12

1. The Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee supports the Accountable Officer with regard to the efficient and effective use of income and expenditure and the associated responsibilities around risk, control, governance and assurance.

The Committee meets quarterly and is chaired by a Non-Executive Director (NXD) member who is currently also a member of the NRS Strategic Board. Other attendees include, SG internal audit, external audit and representatives from SG Finance Directorate as well as other NXD members.

The role of NXD members of the Committee is to advise the NRS Chief Executive Officer, Accountable Officer and the NRS Strategy Board on:

- the strategic processes for risk, control and governance and the governance statement;
- the approval and signing of the annual report and accounts, including the process for review of the accounts prior to submission for audit, levels of error identified, and management's letter of representation to the external auditors;
- the planned activity and results of both internal and external audit including reports, advice and findings from external audit on NRS financial statements in the annual report and accounts, in accordance with ISA 260;
- the adequacy of management response to issues identified by audit activity, including external audit's management letter/report;
- the effectiveness of the internal control environment;
- the formulation of an effective three lines of defence assurance framework focussed on the organisation's key risks ;
- counter-fraud policies, whistle-blowing processes, and arrangements for special investigations.

The Role of the Chair of the NRS Audit & Risk Committee is to:

- provide effective leadership to the Committee, including chairing meetings and fostering sound decision-making and full participation by other members of the Committee; advise the Accountable Officer on financial and corporate governance matters (including risk management) and to quality assure, at a strategic level, the audit strategy and related audit reports and actions;
- ensure effective communications between the work of the Audit & Risk Committee and the Management Board.

2. The Strategic Board

The purpose of the Strategic Board of National Records of Scotland the "NRS Board", which acts in an advisory capacity to the Chief Executive, is to advise on the operations of NRS, with a particular focus on the strategic direction of the organisation, checking it is on track to deliver the purpose and vision. It considers the balance between business and transformation activities and uses the experience of Non-Executive Directors (NXDs) to identify opportunities and emerging issues that ought to be taken into consideration. The Board meets quarterly and at present comprises the Chief Executive (Chair), five Business Lead Directors and five NXDs.

3. About National Records of Scotland (NRS)

National Records of Scotland (NRS) is a Non-Ministerial Office (NMO) within the Scottish Administration. It is headed by a Chief Executive who fulfils the role of two statutory office holders, the Registrar General for Scotland and the Keeper of the Records of Scotland. The role of Accountable Officer is held by the Director of Strategy and Business Services and is appointed by The Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government in accordance with the responsibilities set out in the Memorandum to Accountable Officers as Annex 1 to the Scottish Public Finance Manual

4. NRS Corporate Governance

Like other Scottish public bodies, NRS operates within the National Performance Framework set by Scottish Ministers. The framework underpins delivery of the Scottish Government's purpose.

The corporate governance and oversight arrangements which NRS has in place can be found on our website at: www.nrscotland.gov.uk/about-us

5. Application Guidance and Selection Process

Your application is very important as it is the key document which will determine whether or not you will proceed through the first assessment stage to final assessment stage (comprising of a short talk /presentation and interview) and ultimately to appointment. You must, therefore, demonstrate clearly the evidence required at the first stage to show how you meet the essential criteria.

Please do not substitute your Curriculum Vitae for a completed application form since this will not be considered on its own. This is to enable the selection panel to consider all applications on an equal basis.

If you have any general queries regarding this application pack, please do not hesitate to contact NRS Business Management Unit or telephone 0131 535 1311.

If you require further information about the duties and functions of National Records of Scotland please contact the Chief Executive's Business Management Unit on 0131 535 1311 or at nrs:rg-keeper@nrscotland.gov.uk

6. Completing Your Application

- The application form is provided as a downloadable word document. After completion it should be e-mailed to NRS Business Management Unit. If you have any difficulties using the form or need it in a different format please e-mail [NRS Business Management Unit](#) or telephone 0131 535 1311.
- The **Monitoring Information section** of the completed application form is never seen by the selection panel and is not used to assess your suitability for appointment. The **remaining parts of your application form are made available** to those involved in the shortlisting and interview stages. Please do not worry about referring to named events/activities and employment in your application. It is accepted that there will be situations where the applicant considers this necessary. It is left to the individual's judgement and disclosure of such information will not count against you.

- Refer to the Person Specification for more information on how to complete your application form.

Further advice and examples on completing a competency-based application for a NXD post is available on the [Public Appointments Scotland](#) website where helpful advice on preparing for an interview, can also be found.

Applicants are advised to keep a copy of their initial application for reference.

7. Fit and Proper Person Tests

Candidates must provide the Selection Panel with sufficient information and evidence to enable them to feel confident that the person they are appointing to the board of NRS is a fit and proper person to take up the appointment. In the context of public appointments this is an individual who is suitable for appointment because they meet the requirements of the role and because their past or present activities and/or behaviours do not render them unsuitable for a given appointment. This is an ongoing process with various checks built in to the stages of the appointment round, designed to gather the appropriate information and evidence required. For these appointments, the verifications in place for the fit and proper person tests are:

Verification of relevant information provided by the applicant

- Evaluation of the evidence provided by you in relation to the skills and knowledge required for the role will be tested in the application and further probed at interview should you be invited.
- Those invited for interview, will also be asked to participate in a short task to test their contribution to our Four Key Priorities. This will involve the consideration of a sample Board paper which will form the basis of 10 minute presentation / talk on your selected priority, to the Board prior to interview.
- If applicants provide information in support of having the relevant competency which details roles or qualifications held which is material to the selection panel's decision making, this information may be checked as part of the final assessment.

Ensuring that the applicant's conduct to date has been compatible with the public appointment in question

- Confirmation that you understand the work of NRS and the nature of the appointment and that you are not aware of having committed any offence or performed any act incompatible with the position that you are applying for forms part of the declaration statement of the application form. By virtue of submitting the completed form you are declaring that the information provided is, to the best of your knowledge and belief, true and complete.

Confirmation that the applicant has no inappropriate or unmanageable conflicts of interest incompatible with their appointment

- You are asked in the application form to complete questions about potential conflicts of interest.
- If invited for interview, further assessment will be through questioning that you understand what is meant by a conflict; asking you to confirm that, to the best of your belief, you do not have any conflicts that are incompatible/unmanageable; or seeking additional information if you have declared a conflict in your initial application.
- As part of the Commissioner's Code, if invited for interview you will also be asked to declare if you have had any political activity in the past five years.

Determining that the applicant's appointment is not barred by reference to the constitution of the body concerned by way of, for example, criminal offences or other relevant matters

- Confirmation that you are not disqualified on any grounds from being appointed to this Board forms part of the declaration statement of the application form. By virtue of submitting the completed form you are declaring that the information provided is, to the best of your knowledge and belief, true and complete.

Ensuring that the applicant agrees to apply the Principles of Public Life in Scotland and be bound by the members' code of conduct for the body concerned

- You are referred to the Model Code of Conduct for Members of Devolved Public Bodies www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/02/4841 and you should review it prior to submitting your application. Confirmation that you have read the Model Code of Conduct, that you understand this Code and that you agree to be bound by it in the event that you are appointed forms part of the declaration statement of the application form. By virtue of submitting the completed form you are declaring that the information provided is, to the best of your knowledge and belief, true and complete.
- Applicants are expected to embrace the Principles of Public Life in Scotland. These are highlighted within the application pack. If invited for interview, you will be asked to confirm your understanding of, and agreement to, applying these principles.

Establishing that the individual is able to meet the time commitment required

- The publicity for the role sets out the time commitment involved for the role. If invited for interview, this will be fully explored with you to ensure that you can offer the appropriate assurance that you can undertake the commitment required of the role.

8. How we will handle your application

- Following receipt of your completed application the **Monitoring Information** section will be separated from the rest of the application form.
- Initially your completed application form will be assessed against the essential criteria being tested at this stage to see whether you have the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding. Based on this assessment, the applicants who most closely match the essential criteria will be shortlisted for interview.

Guidance Notes and Role Description for Applicants

- Applicants who are not selected for the interview stage of assessment will be advised of the outcome of their applications in writing.
- Full details of the selection panel are at paragraph 20.
- If invited to the interview stage and you have a disability, it will be this point you should let us know (contact details will be provided in your invitation to next stage) if you would like particular arrangements made.
- If invited to the interview stage you will be asked questions by the selection panel to assess whether you can demonstrate that you have skills, knowledge and understanding required for this role and which meet the essential criteria. You will also undertake an exercise which will test one of the NRS Four Key Priorities as detailed at paragraph 3.2.
- If you are successful you will be invited in writing by the Chief Executive Officer to accept the appointment.
- All applicants invited to the interview stage will be advised in writing of the outcome of their assessment.
- Feedback will be offered to all applicants. Feedback will be based on:
 - the assessment of your merit in relation to the skills and knowledge required; and
 - the outcome of the fit and proper person test (Commissioner's Code requirement) where appropriate.

9. Appointment Round Timetable

The table below shows the key milestones during the appointments process.

Stage In Process	Timescale
Date appointment publicised	5 July 2019
Closing date for applications	26 July 2019
Date of shortlist meeting to select candidates for interview	w/c 29 July 2019
Date by which outcome of shortlist will be relayed to candidates	w/c 12 August 2019
Latest date for unsuccessful applicants to request feedback.	30 August 2019
Date of interviews	Late August/early September
Date by which applicants will be informed of decision	w/c 23 September 2019
Latest date for unsuccessful candidates to request feedback.	13 October 2019
Expected date of appointment	1 November 2019

10. Nationality/Disqualifications

There is no bar on non-British nationals applying for and being appointed to the board of Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs). However, you must be legally entitled to work in the UK.

Members of the Scottish Parliament, Members of Parliament, Members of the House of Lords and Members of the European Parliament are disqualified from applying for these appointments.

11. Equality and Diversity

- Accessibility to public appointments is a fundamental requirement and the public appointments process promotes, demonstrates and upholds equality of opportunity and treatment to all applicants. NRS will always give consideration to disability-related reasonable adjustments that an applicant might request to enable them to meet the person specification and participate fully in the selection process. If you require any of the application pack documentation in an alternative format, please get in touch with [NRS Business Management Unit](#) or telephone 0131 535 1311.

NRS is committed to appointment on merit, diversity and equality for public appointments. For more information about public appointments and other vacancies please visit the dedicated public appointments website at www.appointed-for-scotland.org

12. Effect on existing benefits you may receive currently

The effect of taking up a remunerated public appointment may affect any benefits you receive. This will depend on your individual circumstances and you should, therefore, seek early advice from the office that pays your benefit. Advice can also be found at these two websites:

- www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/index.htm
- www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/FinancialSupport/DisabilityLivingAllowance/index.htm.

13. Postage

If returning your completed application by post, please ensure it bears the correct value of postage as failure to do so may cause Royal Mail to delay your application thus causing you to miss the closing date.

14. Interviews/Expenses

- Applicants can claim for reasonable expenses incurred in attending for interview, including dependent carer expenses. It is expected that the most efficient and economic means of travel will be used and reimbursement will normally be restricted to that amount. When an overnight stay is necessary, you **must** contact with [NRS Business Management Unit](#) or telephone 0131 535 1311.

in advance, for confirmation of current subsistence rates. If invited for interview, the rates with a claim form will be included in the letter of invitation. Receipts must be provided in support of all claims.

15. Publicising Appointments

Should you be appointed, some of the information that you have provided may be made public in the press announcement of your appointment. This applies particularly to any other public appointments you may hold, and of any significant political activity recently undertaken by you. The press release may include:

- your name;
- a short description of the body to which you have been appointed;
- a brief summary of the skills and knowledge you bring to the role;

- the period of remuneration associated with the appointment;
- details of all other public appointments held and any related remuneration received;
- a statement that the appointment is regulated by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland; and
- details of any political activity declared.

16. Disclosure Certificate

The successful candidate will be required to obtain a valid Disclosure Scotland certificate to at least 'basic' level. The fee for a basic Disclosure Certificate is £25, this cost cannot be reimbursed by the Agency. For further information on Disclosure Certificates, please visit the Disclosure Scotland website at www.disclosurescotland.co.uk

17. Complaints

For details of our complaints procedure, please visit the NRS website www.nrscotland.gov.uk/about-us/complaints-procedure or contact:

The Business Management Unit
National Records of Scotland
HM General Register House
2 Princes Street
Edinburgh
EH1 3YY

Tel: 0131 535 1311
E-mail: [NRS Complaints](mailto:NRS.Complaints)

18. Code of Practice

More guidance on code of practice can be obtained by visiting the Ethical Standards [website](#). Alternatively, you can contact [NRS Business Management Unit](#) or telephone 0131 535 1311.

19. Selection Panel

The selection panel will comprise:

- Paul Lowe, NRS Chief Executive (Registrar General for Scotland & Keeper of the Records of Scotland);
- Lorna Gibbs, CEO at Disclosure Scotland; and
- Colin Ledlie, Chair of Audit and Risk Committee.

Applicants will be asked in the application form to declare if and how they know any of the above selection panel.

20. Support and Development

If you are successful at interview and accept the appointment then you will be invited to an induction session that will include (but not be restricted to) the following information:

- the role of ARC Members in challenging and supporting NRS.

- roles and relationships with Ministers and Scottish Government officials;
- organisational structure;
- arrangements for Board meetings;
- budget and financial information; and
- arrangements for expenses.

21. Appraisal

During the term of your appointment you will be subject to an ongoing appraisal process. This will give you an opportunity to discuss your performance with the Chair, highlighting any developmental or training needs which may have been identified.

22. Time Commitment

Throughout the year, Members will be required to commit to the quarterly meetings dealing with the business of ARC. Members will be expected to read papers and provide additional input in between these meetings. They may also be involved in serving on committees.

Members will also be expected to undertake training appropriate to their roles and responsibilities and attendance at workshops or other events for the purposes of development. This could lead to a further commitment in the first year with the majority of that time being towards the beginning of the year.

23. Location of Meetings

Meetings will normally be held in Edinburgh, either in our office in the city centre or in Corstorphine to the west of the city

24. Length of appointment

This appointment will be for up to four years and there is the possibility of re-appointment, subject to evidence of effective performance. Any appointments and subsequent re-appointments will not extend beyond a maximum of eight years.

25. Remuneration

Attendance is required at quarterly meetings of the Board for which there is remuneration of £225 per meeting. Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Attendance at additional meetings or workshops is likely to be required during the year, for which there is the same level of remuneration.

26. Annex A The Nine Principles of Public Life

You have a duty to act in the interests of the public body of which you are a member and in accordance with the core tasks of that body.

Selflessness

You have a duty to take decisions solely in terms of public interest. You must not act in order to gain financial or other material benefit for yourself, family or friends.

Integrity

You must not place yourself under any financial, or other, obligation to any individual or organisation that might reasonably be thought to influence you in the performance of your duties.

Objectivity

You must make decisions solely on merit when carrying out public business.

Accountability and Stewardship

You are accountable for your decisions and actions to the public. You have a duty to consider issues on their merits, taking account of the views of others and must ensure that the public body uses its resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Openness

You have a duty to be as open as possible about your decisions and actions, giving reasons for your decisions and restricting information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

You have a duty to act honestly. You must declare any private interests relating to your public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

You have a duty to promote and support these principles by leadership and example, to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the public body and its members in conducting public business.

Respect

You must respect fellow members of your public body and employees of the body and the role they play, treating them with courtesy at all times.