



SOCIAL SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMITTEE MEMBER – NORTHERN IRELAND

Established in 1980, the Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC) is the main UK advisory body for social security matters. It is responsible for giving advice to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and the Head of the Northern Ireland Department for Social Development on social security and related issues, such as links with the labour market and the wider social welfare context. It has power to scrutinise proposals for secondary legislation, and its reports on proposals are published by the Secretary of State.

The Committee's membership takes in both people with specific knowledge of social security policy, law and operations, and those with broader interests in social welfare policy and related fields. The Committee is independent of Government, the Department and sectional interests, and has a strong track record in offering informed, expert advice. Appointments to the Committee are made by the Secretary of State; in this case, in consultation with the Head of the Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland.

For this post we are looking to recruit someone with a good knowledge of the policy and service delivery context in which the social security system operates in Northern Ireland. Ideally, you should also have a good understanding of the remit and activities of the Department for Work and Pensions in Great Britain. Political neutrality, discretion, commitment to engaging in all aspects of the Committee's remit, communication skills and the ability to work as part of a team are also requirements for this post.

All members serve in a 'generalist' capacity, and you would have the opportunity to contribute to a programme of work covering both the detailed workings of social security provisions, and the wider sweep of policy. Supported by a small secretariat, the Committee is based in London. Posts are part-time (the Committee meets once a month in central London), but Members are expected to take part in up to a day per month of other activities (whenever possible), and fees and expenses are paid.

Information on the Committee and its work plus application forms can be found on our website www.ssac.org.uk. Forms can also be obtained by contacting the Committee Secretary, Gill Saunders, phone 0207 412 1506, email: ssac@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or John O'Neill, phone 028 9052 2606, email: john.oneill@dndni.gov.uk at the Department for Social Development. The deadline for applications is 26 November 2004.

Applications are welcome from members of ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and both men and women. SSAC is committed to the principles of public appointments based on merit, independent assessment and openness, with transparency of process.