

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

13 September 2019

**CPANI Public Board Mentoring Scheme**

For the past two years my office has collaborated in a mentoring scheme for graduate students from the Queen's University Belfast, matching a student mentee with a mentor from the Board of a public body. This scheme enables public appointees to share their professional experience and knowledge with a diverse group of people many of whom come from our younger generation.

I have recently written to thank those of you who have participated in the scheme with QUB mentees. Given its success to date and the continuing involvement of post-graduate students from QUB, I hope we can now extend the scheme to include graduate students within the University of Ulster Business School based at Jordanstown.

As Commissioner I am committed to working with others to develop a public body governing sector that is more diverse and representative of the community it serves. I also want to extend awareness of the work of our public bodies and promote them as an interesting experience for talent across our society. The mentoring scheme is part of these outreach efforts. I hope that you feel that your Board may benefit from such efforts

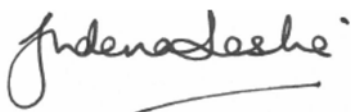
Further information on the scheme is attached at Annexe A of this letter.

I am now again seeking expressions of interest from Chair and Board members willing to act as a mentor to a graduate student. I would therefore gratefully request that this correspondence is shared with all members of your Board and that anyone interested, or a representative of the Board, is asked to contact my office using the details below. A response by 26<sup>th</sup> September would be much appreciated and would enable us to roll out the programme to this year's new intake of post graduate students.

E-mail: [info@publicappointmentsni.org](mailto:info@publicappointmentsni.org)

Tel: 028 905 24820

Yours sincerely,



Judena Leslie  
Commissioner for Public Appointments

## ANNEXE A

### **Public Appointment Mentoring Scheme**

#### Summary

The purpose of this note is to provide information on the public board mentoring scheme involving graduate students from QUB and UUU. The mentoring scheme will be administered by the universities and the office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments and would not involve expenditure on the part of the public body.

#### Background

Representatives from the Graduate School with the QUB approached CPA NI in 2016 seeking advice on interaction with public sector Boards with an interest in developing relations with the public sector in Northern Ireland. CPANI is supportive of relationship building between our universities and our public sector and contact with a dynamic and ambitious post graduate school is a positive development. The result of this interaction was the launch of a mentoring scheme which is now entering its third year. Given the success of the previous schemes the Commissioner hopes to extend the scheme to post graduate students at the University Of Ulster Jordanstown. The subject areas across both universities are diverse and many are directly related to the activities of NI Departments and their arms-length bodies. The subject areas include: environmental science, law, social policy, health policies, the economy and education. This scheme matches graduate student mentees with mentors who are current members of public bodies within Northern Ireland. The scheme will involve the mentee meeting on a number of occasions throughout the year with his/her mentor and attendance at a Board meeting included in the arrangement.

#### Timing and content

It is proposed that the scheme will commence in October 2019, with an initial welcome meeting taking place to launch the scheme and to introduce all mentors and mentees. The scheme will consist of quarterly contact over a one year period. This will include face to face, telephone or online contact. The contact will provide an opportunity to:

- Gain insight in the mentor's roles and responsibilities.
- Identify relevant skills required for public sector roles.

## ANNEXE A

- Identify potential synergies between the mentee's research and the work of the Board
- Consider the mentees career goals, identify development areas and potential ways to address these
- Understanding the Role and Responsibilities of Boards
- Understanding Board Opportunities and how to apply

It is envisaged that mentees will have between four and six meetings with their mentor over the course of the scheme, such meetings could potentially coincide with public Board meetings. However mentors are free to engage further with their mentee as often as they wish.

It is highly desirable that mentees attend a number of Board meetings. In addition, a particularly successful aspect of the previous years has been the willingness of mentors to introduce their post graduate student to colleagues within mentors' networks.