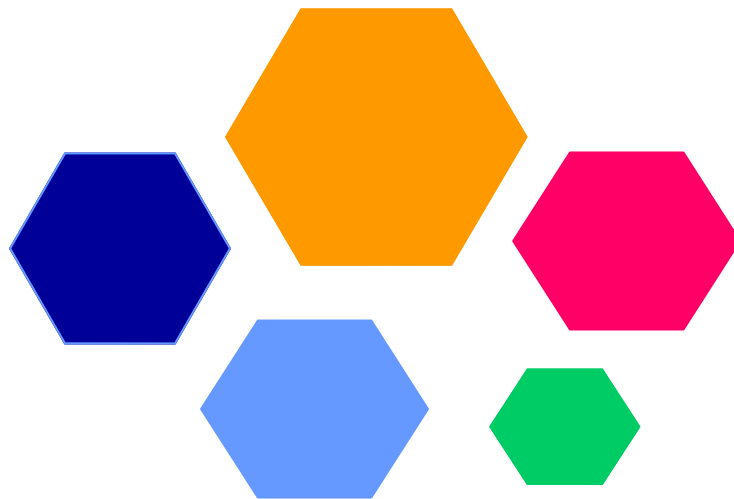


# Careers Service

## Annual Report 2011-12



### **Aim of the Careers Service:**

*“To deliver an effective, impartial and professional careers service to help people realise their career aspirations, enabling them to contribute positively to their community and to the NI economy”*

## What People say about the Careers Service

*"I have found the expertise of the careers adviser invaluable and have already recommended the service to others."*

*Redundant Adult, Bangor*

*"The careers advice I received was fantastic. I wasn't even sure that I could re-apply for university. Without the knowledge and skills I learned at university, I would never have had the confidence to start my own business. I owe all that to the excellent careers advice I received".*

*Adult Client, Derry*

*"Hi, just got an email to say I got the internship with the BBC! Absolutely delighted! Big part of getting it was down to you so thanks again, appreciated your help a lot"*

*Student, Belfast*

*"I have already recommended the Careers Service to other family members I have found their expertise invaluable. "*

*Adult Client, Magherafelt*

## **Who we help and what we provide**

The Careers Service is an integral part of the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and provides an impartial, careers information, advice and guidance service to clients of all ages and abilities throughout Northern Ireland. This service is available to everyone whether they are employed, unemployed, in training or in education, including students in schools and further and higher education. Professionally qualified careers advisers are based in Careers Resource Centres, JobCentres and Jobs and Benefits Offices throughout Northern Ireland.

### **The Careers Service assists those who are:**

- Looking for education/training/employment opportunities
- Thinking of changing job or career direction
- Ready for a new challenge
- Thinking of starting their own business
- Unsure what career might suit them
- Looking for information on a particular career
- Unsure of how to plan their next step

### **The Careers Service provides:**

- Impartial careers information, advice and guidance
- Information about labour market trends and future job opportunities
- Help with CVs; mock interviews and application forms
- Information on Post Graduate opportunities; working overseas and vacation/voluntary work

## SUMMARY OF KEY ACHIEVEMENTS – 2011/12

- Total of 52,663 clients received an individual careers guidance interview
- 36,971 young people received an individual careers guidance interview, an increase of 6% from 2010/11
- 15,692 adults received an individual careers guidance interview, an increase of 81% from 2010/11
- Careers Resource Centre at Richmond Chambers in Londonderry was recredited with the **matrix** Standard, which is the national quality standard for Information, Advice and Guidance
- 98% of young people felt they knew more about their next steps following their guidance interview with a careers adviser
- New look careers website launched [www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers)
- Careers Service moved to a single contact number – 0300 200 7820
- Continued focus on professional development (average 8 days per adviser).  
New NVQ 3 piloted with support staff
- Minister Farry opened a new Careers Resource Centre in Dungannon
- Careers Offices in Downpatrick and Bangor refurbished
- 78% of all year 12 pupils in schools interviewed by a careers adviser (academic year 2010/11)<sup>1</sup>
- Careers Advisers provided careers guidance services to over 5,000 Training for Success trainees.

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<sup>1</sup> Careers Service work in schools is monitored on an academic year basis from September to August

## Preparing for Success

Preparing for Success, the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy (CEIAG) and Implementation Plan, was published jointly by Department of Education (DE) and DEL in January 2009. Its aim is “to develop effective career decision makers leading to increased and appropriate participation in education, training and employment.”

The strategy has been developed around five key themes: improving careers education, improving access to careers information, improving careers advice and guidance, improving quality and improving professional development. Implementation is overseen by the Careers Steering Group which includes representatives from DEL, DE, Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment (DETI), Education and Training Inspectorate and the Business Alliance. During the year membership was expanded to widen stakeholder involvement and now includes representatives from schools, colleges and universities.

### The key milestones during 2011/12 include:

- The Careers Resource Centre in Londonderry (Richmond Chambers) was re-accredited with the **matrix** quality standard for careers guidance
- Careers Guidance Interviews with adults increased by 81% since 2010/2011
- A careers conference for leaders in schools and further education colleges was held at Greenmount College in June 2011. The aim of the event was to engage with key stakeholders, highlight the importance of effective career decision making and to raise awareness of alternative routes to success
- A careers information hub has been developed in partnership with nidirect and work is progressing in the following areas:
  - Website review and maintenance
  - Software procurement
  - Exploring the use of telephone helpline and social media
- Office refurbishments have taken place in Dungannon, Downpatrick and Bangor
- Careers Service signage has been completed in DEL facilities.

## All In A Year's Work

- ✓ **Quality Award for the Careers Resource Centre at Richmond Chambers**



**Pictured: Careers staff at Richmond Chambers, Londonderry with the prestigious Matrix Quality Standard Award which they have achieved for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time.**

In May 2011 the Careers Resource Centre at Richmond Chambers in Londonderry was reaccruited with the **matrix** Standard, which is the national quality standard for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Services.

The Careers Resource Centre first attained this award in 2004 and has held it consistently since.

The assessor commented: *“The dedicated team of staff provided a professional service to meet individual needs, and those interviewed during Assessment described how access to this service had impacted on their career choices or job prospects.”*

The Careers Resource Centre caller traffic has increased year on year since it's opening in 2002 and last year the Centre provided careers services to over 10,000 clients. Clients can access information, advice and guidance in relation to education, training and employment opportunities. Support can also be provided with job-search, interviews and compiling CVs. The Centre hosts a JobCentre kiosk with details of vacancies and two computers for public internet use.

### ✓ **National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in Advice & Guidance**

New National Occupational Standards and new qualifications have been developed at levels 3, 4 and 6 in careers advice and guidance. 8 Careers Service support staff successfully completed the NVQ 3 Advice and Guidance which has further developed their ability to support clients to make use of the advice and guidance service.

### ✓ **New Website**

During the year the Careers Service worked in partnership with nidirect, the official Government website for Northern Ireland to revise and update the Careers website. The new look careers website [www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers) was launched with nidirect in August 2011.

The careers website provides a range of information on education and training, career planning, careers events, information on occupations and current and future labour market trends. The site also offers a number of career matching software tools which will enable users to match their interests and abilities to jobs, while researching over 1800 job titles. The Careers Service and nidirect will continue to maintain and develop the website in 2012/2013.

In 2011/12 the website registered 158,276 visits, an increase of 52% (53,916) on the 2010/11 figures.

### ✓ **Single Telephone Number 0300 200 7820**

In the 2011/12 business year the Careers Service moved to a single contact telephone number (0300 200 7820) using nidirect telephony services. The aim is to make it easier for customers and stakeholders to contact the Careers Service. Since 1 August 2011 nidirect transferred over 4,300 telephone calls from customers to careers offices throughout Northern Ireland.

## ✓ **Industry Factsheets**

In May 2011, the Careers Service in partnership with the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils and the Department's Analytical Services team refreshed all 25 Industry Factsheets. The Industry Factsheets provide details of a variety of occupations, information on job prospects, relevant skills, entry requirements, highlight current vacancies and skills shortages within each Sector Skills area. The Industry Factsheets are available on the Careers Service website [www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers).

## ✓ **Media and Marketing Work**

The Careers Service works in partnership with the Department's Communications Team to promote and highlight the availability of an impartial careers information, advice and guidance service to clients at key decision points throughout their lifetime.

2011/12 was extremely successful with the publication of over 200 media articles. The Post Results Service campaign initiated intensive media activity with a total of over 40 radio and TV interviews broadcast.

## ✓ **International Engagement**

To support our work in the provision and continuous improvement of high quality guidance services, the Careers Service engages in relevant international events and networks. The aim is to learn from and share best practice to shape careers policy and practice at an international level.

The Careers Service is a member of the UK team participating in the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). The main function of the network is to assist the national authorities to implement the recommendations of European Council Resolutions and Conclusions pertaining to lifelong guidance through EU collaborative activity and, in so doing, to enhance national policy and systems development. The UK team is particularly interested in the work packages relating to careers management skills, access and quality/impact.



The Careers Service has contributed significantly to the development of the ELGPN Quality Assurance Framework: Evidence and Impact, measuring 5 key aspects:

- Practitioner competence
- Citizen/user involvement
- Service provision and improvement
- Cost benefits to society
- Cost benefits to individuals

The framework is due to be finalised in the coming months and will be included in the ELGPN Resource Kit for Policy Makers which is due to be published in October 2012.

The Careers Service was also represented at the 6<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy which was held in Budapest in December 2011. The symposium aimed to build closer dialogues and linkages between career guidance policy makers in the fields of education, employment, economic development and social inclusion, and with strategic professional leaders and researchers. The event was attended by 127 participants from 31 countries.

## Careers Events

### ➤ ***Education & Career Decisions – Routes to Employment & Social Engagement Conference***

In June 2011 DEL and DE organised a joint conference for leaders in schools and further education colleges. The event, which was held at Greenmount College, was jointly opened by Dr Stephen Farry, Minister for Employment and Learning, and John O'Dowd, Minister of Education. The aim was to engage with key stakeholders, highlight the importance of effective career decision making and to raise the awareness of alternative routes to success.

Over 120 participants were updated on the progress of the implementation of “Preparing for Success” and gained an overview of the current economic climate and future projections. They also heard an employer’s perspective, listened to the voice of a young entrepreneur and the 2010 Apprentice of the Year Winner about alternative routes to success.



***Pictured at the Event: Dr Stephen Farry, DEL Minister; Judith Shaw & Frances O'Hara,***

➤ ***Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) Higher Education Convention 2011***

The Northern Ireland UCAS Higher Education Convention took place at the King's Hall, Belfast in March 2012. The annual convention is organised in partnership with UCAS and DEL's Careers Service. It is aimed mainly at students in year 13 and those in further education and is the largest higher education exhibition in Northern Ireland.

This year 127 exhibitors took part representing the majority of UK universities and colleges, a number of colleges and universities from the Republic of Ireland, GAP Year organisations, student support services, professional bodies, student travel firms and the Student Loan Company. 8,500 students from 98 schools attended this year's event.

The Careers Service organised individual seminars across a number of subjects including 5 new areas:

- Careers in Agri-food sector
- Studying in Europe
- Green careers/sustainable energy
- Journalism & Media
- Higher opportunities in further education colleges

➤ ***Balmoral Show***

The Annual Balmoral Show was held at the King's Hall, Belfast in May 2011. The overall theme was 'Delivering change ... Meeting challenges' and DEL was one of a number of Government Departments and agencies in attendance. An estimated 70,000 visitors attended the show with many availing of the careers information advice and guidance on offer at the Careers Service stand.

## **Working in Partnership**

The Careers Service has Partnership Agreements with 98% of post primary schools in Northern Ireland, Regional Colleges of further education and training suppliers. These agreements help to support access to young people particularly in year 10 and 12 and provide effective referral arrangements for people in training and further education. During the 2010/11 academic year 78% of year 12 pupils received a one to one guidance interview and over 5,000 Training for Success trainees received careers guidance services.

In addition the Careers Service works with a range of partner organisations including the Health and Social Care Board, the Youth Justice Agency, Social Services, Youth Service and Education Welfare Service to ensure that clients are able to avail of appropriate careers guidance services.

The Careers Service is also actively involved in local Area Learning Communities (ALC) with careers teachers and staff from the Education Library Board. This has generated a better understanding of individual roles and responsibilities.

## **EGSA**

DEL continues to fund the provision of a niche suite of outreach careers services to adults in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, delivered by the Educational Guidance Service for Adults. The funding provided also includes service provision to employees facing redundancy.

## **University of Ulster**

### **Postgraduate Diploma in Careers Guidance**

The Careers Service works in partnership with the University of Ulster (UU) to provide work based learning (WBL) and assessment for students working towards the Postgraduate Diploma in Careers Guidance. Fourteen students commenced study in September 2011 which included two days per week and two further week long WBL placements within the Careers Service.

During this academic year the UU Postgraduate Diploma in Careers Guidance was successfully revalidated.

## **What our Partners say about the Careers Service**

*"The Education Welfare Service values highly its working relationship with the Careers Service. Individual officers from both services have been able to work at a local level to enhance the support given to young people as they plan for the future. The knowledge and expertise that careers advisers bring to any young person that we work with has proven inestimable and constantly reaffirms the value to us of working in partnership with other professionals ."*

**Education Welfare Officer, WELB**

*"Through our partnership working with the Careers Service we know and are assured that every young person in care is receiving essential and comprehensive careers information, advice and guidance on a day to day basis."*

**Social Care Commissioning Lead for Children & Families**

**Social Care & Children's Directorate**

*"A key feature of the programme was the integration of work-based learning with University-based teaching"*

**Revalidation Panel, University of Ulster**

## **Working with Young People**

The Careers Service continues to offer support to young people in school, training and further education, encouraging them to evaluate their personal circumstances and aspirations, explore labour market trends and consider the wide range of options available, in order to achieve their full potential.

Work with the NEET client group (young people not in education, employment and training) is a core element of careers advisers work, with the key purpose of helping this client group access appropriate education, training or employment opportunities. The Careers Service is committed to the interdepartmental strategy, 'Pathways to Success', and has participated in a research project examining the possibility of developing a tracking system for individual young people who are NEET. Operationally our commitment to this area of work includes a careers adviser supporting each client in their career decision making on a case managed basis until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### **Case Study**

#### ***University dream becomes a reality, thanks to DEL's Careers Service***

A young sportsman was unsuccessful in gaining a full time university place he contacted his local careers office. The careers adviser made him aware of all his options and advised him about the part time degree course in Sports Coaching. This would also allow him more time to dedicate to his intensive training schedule. He started the course in September 2011 and is progressing well with both his studies and his chosen sport.

The client said: *"Without the guidance of the careers adviser I may not have been afforded the opportunity to embark on the exciting journey of going to university to study towards becoming a Professional Sports Coach."*

## **Working with Adults**

The Careers Service promotes the benefits of lifelong learning and works in partnership with DEL's Employment Service to ensure that their clients are aware of the services available and are referred appropriately. As a result of this work and other marketing initiatives, 15,692 adults availed of a careers guidance interview in 2011/12. This is an increase of 81% on the previous year. Of these, approximately 5,500 interviews were with clients who were unemployed.

### ***Case Studies***

#### ***Help for Redundant Adult***

An administrative assistant was made redundant from her job after 19 years and she had no idea of what to do. Worried that she would not find a new job in a very competitive market, a friend recommended the Careers Service. After talking through her situation she was given advice on how to update her CV and how to use Careers Service website. She forwarded her updated CV to employers and was offered two interviews. Although delighted, she lacked confidence and spoke once again with the careers adviser who arranged a mock interview. With growing confidence in her own ability she attended both interviews and was successful.

The client commented: *"I have found the expertise of the careers adviser invaluable and have already recommended the service to others."*

## The Facts

### Individual career guidance interviews:

	Financial Year 2010/11	Financial Year 2011/12	Increase	% Increase
Young People	34,801	36,971	2,170	6%
Adults	8,677	15,692	7,015	81%
Total	43,478	52,663	9,185	21%

Partnership Agreements, detailing the services agreed in each school, are in place with 259 post primary schools (including special, independent and hospital schools).

The Careers Service interviewed 18,941 year 12 pupils during the 2010/11 academic year<sup>2</sup>, providing them with a tailored service prior to them making decisions on their career path.

### Have we made an impact?

Client satisfaction surveys are conducted to track progress and measure the quality of our service. The survey for young people showed that:

- 98% of respondents felt they knew more about their next steps into education/training or employment following a careers guidance interview
- 98% were very satisfied or satisfied with the action plans they developed
- 96% felt they could move forward with their career plan
- 97% felt more confident about their career decision making.

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<sup>2</sup> Careers Service work in schools is monitored on an academic year basis September to August



## **Staff Development**

### **➤ Professional Development**

As part of its ongoing commitment to continuous professional development (CPD), the Department continues to pay professional membership fees to the Institute of Careers Guidance (ICG) for careers advisers and managers. ICG is the largest professional association for career guidance practitioners in the UK.

The importance attached to CPD by the Careers Service is further demonstrated by the number of days allocated to training. In 2011/12 each careers adviser engaged in an average of 8 CPD days. The key areas covered included recruitment processes and procedures, using labour market information in the guidance process, theories of guidance and social inclusion policy and practice. Careers advisers also attended Open Days at various educational establishments and some also participated in working groups for media and resources.

## **Accommodation**

### **Roll-out of Careers Resource Centre model**

Building on the existing provision in Belfast and Londonderry Minister Farry opened a new Careers Resource Centre in Dungannon in June 2011. Careers offices in Bangor and Downpatrick were also refurbished and Careers Service signage has been improved in a further 19 JobCentres/ Jobs and Benefits Offices.

## **Finance**

The Careers Service spend for the 2011/12 financial year was £5,523,166 which includes both salary and programme costs.

## Careers Service Staff

At 31 March 2012 there were a total of 182 members of staff in the Careers Service. 33.5% of staff work on a reduced hours basis bringing the full-time equivalency to a total of 164.45. Staff in post at the end of March 2012 was as follows:

### Careers Service Operations

Grade	Staff in post - Full Time Equivalency (FTE)	Number of staff
Head of Careers Service Operations	1	1
Deputy Heads of Careers Service Operations	3	3
Careers Managers	12	12
Careers Advisers	101.11*	112
Careers Support Staff	37	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>154.11</b>	<b>170</b>

\*includes 2 staff on loan to the Careers Policy and Strategy team

### Careers Policy and Strategy

Grade	Staff in post - Full Time Equivalency (FTE)	Number of staff
Head of Careers Policy & Strategy	1	1
Deputy Heads of Operations, Policy & Strategy	1.95	2
Careers Managers	3	3
Careers Information Officers	2.39	4
Careers Policy and Strategy Support Staff	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.34</b>	<b>12</b>

## **Future Developments**

### **➤ Quality**

Building on the success of the Careers Resource Centre in Londonderry, the Department has commitment to achieve matrix accreditation for the Careers Service as a whole by April 2013. This will help to embed a culture of quality and continuous improvement and will provide external validation.

### **➤ Helping Adults to upskill**

The Careers Service has a role to play in helping prepare the existing workforce to ensure they are appropriately skilled to meet future needs of the economy. As part of this the Ann Street Resource Centre will pilot extended opening hours to accommodate those people who may have difficulty accessing the service during the normal working week

### **➤ Helping the unemployed find work**

Working closely with the Department's Employment Service will be an important future development. In the current economic down-turn and with the introduction of the Universal Credit, it is important that those looking for work have ready access to the support and guidance that careers advisers can provide to help them find and sustain employment.

### **➤ Labour Market Information**

As part of the 'Success through Skills - Transforming Futures' implementation plan, the careers service is leading a project, 'Harnessing Labour Market Information'. The aim of the project is to 'improve access to and facilitate the effective use of clear and up-to-date labour market information.' This will include information on current and projected skills shortages and opportunities. Research commenced in April 2012 and the Careers Service will take forward the findings during the 2012 / 2013 financial year.

### **➤ Partnership**

The Careers Service plans to further enhance their work with partner organisations particularly in relation to young people not in education, training or employment.

➤ **Parents**

Parents are recognised as having a key influence on young people's career decisions. Work is being progressed to develop materials to support parents in this important role.

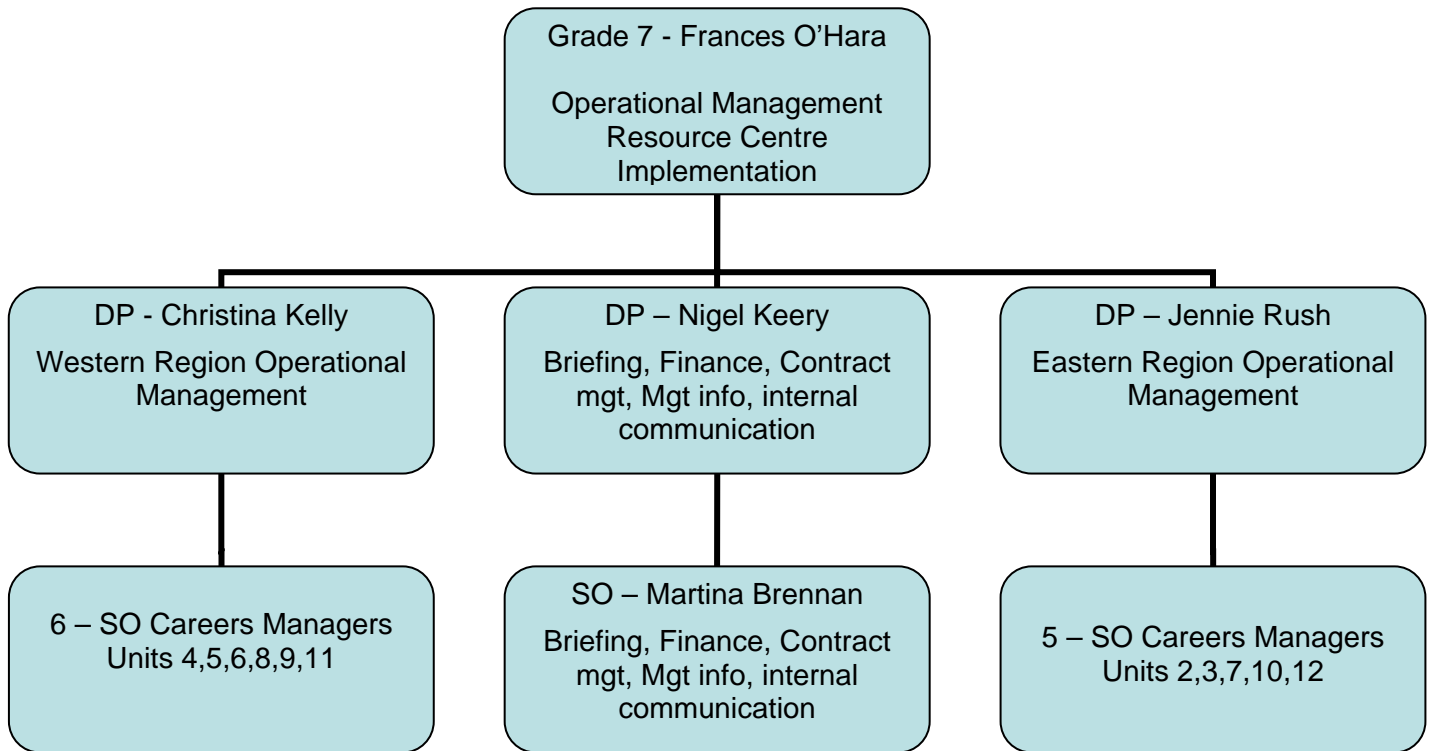
➤ **Impact Measurement**

The Careers Service plans to trial the European Lifelong Learning Policy Network Quality Framework which will be published in autumn 2012.

➤ **Improving Access**

The Careers Service provides a universal service, available to all, irrespective of age or employment status. We appreciate that we need to ensure that people are aware of this and can access our service in a way that suits their needs. Further work will be carried out in 2012/13 to explore additional access channels including text messaging and social media.

**Careers Service Operations**



**CAREERS SERVICE UNITS OF MANAGEMENT**

UNIT	OFFICE LOCATIONS	MANAGER
2	Belfast - Ann Street	Angela Rooney
3	Gloucester House	Terry O'Hanlon
4	Antrim/Cookstown/Magherafelt	Siobhan McKenna
5	Ballymena/Carrickfergus/Larne	George Adams
6	Ballymoney/Coleraine/Limavady	Joanne McKinney
7	Bangor/Ballynahinch/Newtownards	Margaret Magennis
8	Armagh/Dungannon/Portadown	Nuala McKenna
9	Enniskillen/Omagh/Strabane	Jo Boyle
10	Banbridge/Lisburn/Lurgan	Patricia Frazer
11	Londonderry - Richmond Chambers	Mary Hegarty
12	Downpatrick/Newcastle/Newry	Johnny Nolan

**APPENDIX B**

**Careers Policy & Strategy**

