**Northern Ireland Registered Intermediaries**

Thank you for expressing an interest in applying to become a Registered Intermediary (RI) with the Northern Ireland Registered Intermediaries Scheme.

This pack contains the following information:

* Selection process
* Background on the RI Scheme and the Department of Justice’s recruitment campaign
* Role of the Registered Intermediary;
* Job Description;
* Person Specification;
* Codes of Practice and Ethics; and
* Application Guidance Notes.

**Selection process**

Applicants for the Registered Intermediary Scheme can come from a wide background ofprofessional roles and occupations, such as speech and language therapy, behavioural therapy, clinical and forensic psychology, educational psychology, social work and the mental health profession. **At least 12 months’ professional experience in one of these roles is required**.

Given the need for flexibility, this role may be less suitable for those in full-time employment *(although the scheme remains open to full time employees subject to you meeting the criteria).* The scheme may particularly suit applicants who are employed on a part-time or reduced hours basis, those who are self-employed, retired or semi-retired. **Applicants must be in a position to accept at least two new cases per month**.

The application form is provided separately.

The closing date for applications is **4pm 17th December 2021.**

Successful applicants **must** be available to attend interviews, which will be held online, week commencing **Monday 10th January 2022**.

*Interview*

The interview will consist of two parts: a case study exercise, followed by a competency-based interview.

The case study exercise will be sent to you the day before your interview, you must complete the case study exercise and submit it before 5pm on the day you receive it. The purpose of this exercise is to test your understanding and application of the Registered Intermediary core competencies. This exercise requires you to consider what factors may impact on vulnerable witnesses and defendants with communication difficulties when telling their story to the police and courts, and what a Registered Intermediary would do to enable the vulnerable person to give their best possible evidence. Your report will be submitted to the interview panel as part of your assessment. Guidance will be provided before commencing the case study exercise.

The interview will last 45 minutes and will have two parts. You will have approximately 15 minutes to give a brief overview of key points in your case study report and answer any questions the panel may have. The second part of the interview (30 minutes) will explore how you meet the Registered Intermediary core competencies and your reasons for applying. The interview panel will be looking for you to provide evidence of how your professional skills may equip you for the role of a Registered Intermediary.

The core competencies to be tested at interview will be as follows:

* Accurately and quickly assess an individual's receptive and expressive communication needs.
* Develop strategies to enable an individual with communication difficulties to understand, and communicate accurately and coherently.
* Describe an individual’s communication difficulties to others
* Facilitate communication between an individual with communication difficulties and others
* Demonstrate professionalism in order to establish credibility

*Training*

**Applicants who are successful at interview must be available to attend the virtual mandatory training on all of the following six days:**

* **Monday 31st January to Wednesday 02nd February; and,**
* **Monday 14th February to Wednesday 16th February 2022.**

Applicants will not be registered as intermediaries if they do not pass the training. Please note that re-sits cannot be taken.

Any additional requests for information can be made to the Intermediaries Schemes Secretariat at: DOJ.intermediaries@justice-ni.gov.uk

**Background on the RI Scheme and recruitment campaign**

The Department of Justice manages the statutory Registered Intermediary Scheme which launched in May 2013.

As a result of increasing demand for the service the Department has decided to launch a recruitment campaign for more Registered Intermediaries (RIs) in order to build resilience and ensure that there are sufficient RIs for DOJ to meet its statutory responsibilities in respect of the scheme and to respond to requests for RI support in other non-criminal cases (for example in relation to civil justice cases or public inquiries) where that is considered appropriate.

The scheme is initiated when a person who has a significant communication difficulty needs assistance during the criminal justice process, if their communication deficits would diminish the quality of their evidence (in the case of witnesses) or would mean that they would be unable to participate effectively in proceedings as a witness giving oral evidence (in the case of defendants). The person’s communication difficulties could arise due, for example, to a learning disability, social communication difficulty (e.g. autism), mental health issue, neurological disorder or a physical disability, or by virtue of their age.

The existing statutory RI Scheme operates in Youth, Magistrates and Crown Courts sittings across Northern Ireland and the requirement to deliver the service is set out in statute in Articles 17, 21BA and 21BB of the Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1999. Separately, the Department of Justice has agreed that RIs under the scheme may be used to assist with evidence gathering by the Muckamore Abbey Hospital Inquiry Team (although this does not fall within the parameters of the statutory scheme).

**The Role of the Northern Ireland Registered Intermediary**

**Why become a Registered Intermediary?**

This is an opportunity to be part of the Registered Intermediaries Scheme in Northern Ireland to assist vulnerable victims, witnesses for both the prosecution and defence, and vulnerable suspects and defendants to communicate effectively during the police investigation and any subsequent trial.

Registered Intermediaries (RIs) provide specialist assistanceto people with significant communication deficits and play an important role in assisting vulnerable victims, witnesses, suspects and defendants to give their best evidence. Through the provision of communication strategies, RIs make the criminal justice process accessible to some of the most vulnerable in our society. In many cases, an RI is the difference between a victim not being able to communicate adequately and being able to tell the police and the courts what happened to them. Some vulnerable defendants also need assistance with communication in order to have a fair trial.

**Who can become a Registered Intermediary?**

An applicant must demonstrate that they have the skills required and they must pass each assessment to complete the training. Key skills include assessing and facilitating communication and an ability to establish credibility within a professional setting. The key skills will be assessed through an interview, including a presentation on a case study analysis.

You do not need to have previous experience of working within the criminal justice system to apply.

Successful applicants **must** be available to attend interviews during week commencing **Monday 10th January 2022** and attend **mandatory training** as detailed above.

**Do you need to belong to a particular profession to become a Registered Intermediary?**

The application process is competence based, and it is open to a wide range of candidates on the basis of their individual skills and experience. However, membership of a relevant professional body is required, for example, the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists or NI Social Care Council.

It is hoped that applicants will come from a wide range of professional roles and occupations, such as speech and language therapy, behavioural therapy, clinical and forensic psychology, educational psychology, social work and the mental health professions. **At least 12 months’ professional experience is required** to ensure applicants can bring the skills and experience gained in these professions to their work as an RI.

Intermediaries are approved by the courts and candidates must be prepared for their personal expertise and conduct to be open to legal challenge. Successful candidates will have demonstrated their expertise in facilitating communication with vulnerable people, in the way envisaged for the RI role, and their ability to operate effectively as an RI in criminal proceedings.

**What training do I receive to become a Registered Intermediary?**

Before inclusion on the Northern Ireland Intermediaries Register, candidates who have been successful at interview must complete and pass a modular training course.

The aim of the course is to prepare candidates to operate effectively and credibly as a Registered Intermediary within the criminal justice system. It seeks to familiarise them with relevant criminal law and procedure, and with stakeholders and participants (Department of Justice, Police Service of Northern Ireland, Public Prosecution Service, NI Courts and Tribunals Service, judiciary, defence legal representatives, etc.). It will provide a developmental framework around a candidate’s existing professional and personal skills and help them build the confidence to successfully fulfil the role of a Registered Intermediary.

This is an intense and challenging course, consisting of mandatory pre-course learning in two three-day blocks. The modules consist of trainer-led discussions, case studies in which delegates role-play the functions of a Registered Intermediary, presentations from stakeholders and visits (possibly virtually) to a police station and Belfast Crown Court.

**Assessment**

The assessment consists of a pre-course multiple choice exam, submission of a personalised assessment plan and a written report, and a role-play assessment and written examination on the final day.

**Costs and expenses**

The Department of Justice funds the cost of providing the training course however successful candidates will be expected to meet their own personal and professional costs while attending the training.

**Dates for training and assessment**

The dates for the training course are shown below and **applicants must be available to attend on all of these dates**:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Module 1 | Pre-course learning |
| Modules 2 – 4 | 31/01/22-02/02/22 |
| Modules 5 - 7 | 14/02/22-16/02/22 |

**Continuous Professional Development**

Post-qualification, there will be the opportunity to attend Registered Intermediary Continuous Professional Development days. Training on Achieving Best Evidence interviews will also be arranged post-registration. A Northern Ireland RI Regional Support Group meet quarterly at which the RIs share learning and discuss challenges.

**What do Registered Intermediaries do?**

Registered Intermediaries (RIs) have a range of responsibilities that help vulnerable victims, witnesses for the prosecution and defence, suspects and defendants to give their best evidence. They also provide advice and recommendations on how best to communicate with vulnerable persons to criminal justice practitioners (including defence legal representatives) at various stages of the criminal process from police investigation to trial.

The steps described below give a very brief overview of the RI’s role:

1. The RI conducts an assessment of the vulnerable person's communication needs.
2. The RI provides the investigating police officer or defence solicitor with a preliminary report which outlines communication strategies to enable planning for the interview.
3. The RI is present during the interview in order to advise and assist with communication.
4. The RI writes a court report if the case proceeds to trial and will attend the Ground Rules Hearing.
5. The RI is present during the giving of evidence by the vulnerable victim, witness for the prosecution and defence, or defendant to facilitate their communication at that time.

RIs are officers of the court – they are impartial, neutral, objective and transparent when carrying out their role.

**Who can get help from a Registered Intermediary?**

Registered Intermediaries provide specialist assistanceto people with significant communication difficulties. Vulnerable individuals who may need the assistance of an RI include young children and individuals with a learning or physical disability, social communication difficulty, mental health issue or neurological or progressive disorder.

**How will a Registered Intermediary be remunerated for their duties?**

Registered Intermediaries work for the Department of Justice on a self-employed basis (even though they may be employed in another role) and are able to claim remuneration for travel and subsistence costs, and a professional fee for time spent on duties in this role. Fees, which may be reviewed, are payable at the following rates:

* £38.94 per hour or £9.73 per quarter hour for time spent carrying out the duty – the professional fee.
* Travel time rate is £16.00 per hour or £4.00 per quarter hour (for travel associated with carrying out the duty).

The RI will be responsible for invoicing for their time, filling in an annual tax return and arranging for the secure disposal of case papers in line with Department of Justice information management policy.

**What are the time commitments?**

**Please note there is no guaranteed level of work from the scheme, however, Registered Intermediaries must be in a position to accept at least two new cases per month, if requested to do so**.

In practice, some RIs will spend more time on RI duties than others. The time commitment depends on a range of factors, including availability and existing working arrangements, the number of referrals received and an individual’s communication skills profile.

Applicants **must** be prepared to work during the evenings, at night and at weekends, if required. As well as time spent on assessments and attending interviews and court, time will also be needed for report writing.

**It is particularly important that applicants can be flexible and be able to take cases at short notice**.

When possible, advance warning will be given that RI assistance is required. However, an RI may be asked at short notice to assist a vulnerable victim, witness for the prosecution or defence, suspect or defendant, as criminal justice practitioners can require an assessment and interview to be carried out within 24 hours, including during the evening and at weekends. Applicants should also be aware that dates to attend court can be changed frequently, often at short notice. Given the need for flexibility, this role may be unsuitable for those in full-time employment. It particularly suits applicants who are in employment on a part-time or reduced hours basis, are self-employed, retired or semi-retired.

Potential applicants should consider carefully (including with their employer, if appropriate) whether they can meet the time commitments and offer the necessary flexibility.

**Northern Ireland Registered Intermediaries Job Description**

RIs undertake the following functions:

* Quickly establish rapport with a vulnerable victim, witness for the prosecution or defence, suspect or defendant (the “witness/defendant”).
* Use professional or clinical skills to accurately assess the witness/ defendant’s receptive and expressive communication needs, through both informal assessments and standardised tests.
* Use their assessment findings to develop communication strategies which will enable the witness/defendant to understand questions put to them and communicate their answers back.
* Describe, orally and in writing, the communication needs of the witness/defendant to the criminal justice practitioners and work with them to enable the witness/defendant to give their best evidence in the criminal justice process. This could include advice on the structure of questions used and concepts that the witness/defendant has difficulty understanding.
* During the giving of evidence, actively facilitate communication between the witness/defendant and the other parties in the case to overcome a communication breakdown, for example, through the rephrasing of questions (if requested by the police, legal representatives or judge) without changing their substantive meaning.
* Write reports that detail the witness’s/defendant’s communication needs and outline strategies for managing these needs which will be used by police officers, legal representatives and the court. This will include justifying any recommendations made and the need for an RI, if challenged.

**Northern Ireland Registered Intermediaries Person Specification**

**Skills and Abilities**

* Professional skills in helping vulnerable persons with significant communication difficulties.
* Ability to quickly establish rapport with vulnerable persons with communication needs.
* Experience in carrying out a range of informal assessments and/or standardised tests to accurately and quickly assess a vulnerable person’s receptive and expressive communication needs.
* Ability to develop strategies to enable vulnerable persons to understand and communicate.
* Experience of actively facilitating communication between a vulnerable person and another party.
* Excellent oral and written communication skills.
* Experience in writing reports on a vulnerable person’s communication needs.

**Personal Qualities and Attributes**

* *Professionalism*: Northern Ireland Registered Intermediaries (RIs) are required to work with a range of different people, including vulnerable witnesses and defendants, police officers, legal professionals and social workers. They must be able to adapt their approach accordingly.
* *Credibility*: RIs must be able to establish a credible persona with both criminal justice professionals and vulnerable witnesses/defendants.
* *Approachability*: RIs must present complex information, both verbally and in writing, in an easily accessible form to enable criminal justice practitioners to understand a witness’s/defendant’s communication needs.
* *Flexibility*: RIs can often be required to assess a witness/defendant at short notice, including during the evening, at night and at weekends, so flexibility is required.
* *Impartiality*: an RI is appointed to serve the court and the interests of justice, not the witness/defendant or any particular party in the case.
* *Resilience*: RIs can be required to act in emotionally challenging cases, such as child cruelty and sexual offences cases.
* *Ambassadorial skills*: this is a recently introduced profession in Northern Ireland’s criminal justice system so RIs must be able to explain their role and present a professional persona.

**Code of Practice for Northern Ireland Registered Intermediaries**

1. The primary responsibility of the Northern Ireland Registered Intermediary (RI) is to enable complete, coherent and accurate communication to take place between a vulnerable person who requires intermediary assistance and criminal justice practitioners.
2. They must have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the responsibilities and duties of their role within the criminal justice system, including their primary responsibility to the court.
3. They must conduct themselves in a neutral, impartial, professional and courteous manner at all times.
4. They must be familiar with and observe the terms and conditions and procedures that govern their assignment.
5. They should identify the sources of advice, information and materials required in order to ensure a clear understanding of the particular needs of the vulnerable person.
6. They must carry out a functional assessment of the communication needs of the vulnerable person and make an informed professional judgement of the time required to enable them to carry out the assessment satisfactorily.
7. They will use the background information provided and will meet with the vulnerable person and, as appropriate, their relatives, supporter, carer or relevant professionals to acquaint themselves fully with the knowledge and understanding required to carry out the assignment successfully.
8. They must not enter discussions, give advice or express opinions concerning the evidence the vulnerable person is to present or any aspect of the case that could contaminate the evidence or lead to an allegation of rehearsing or coaching the vulnerable person.
9. They must keep the Intermediaries Scheme Secretariat (ISS) and other appropriate parties informed of any difficulties that may arise in the course of the assignment that may affect the prospects of evidence being given.
10. They must hold meetings with the vulnerable person within a time-scale agreed with the End-user and in appropriate venues.
11. They must make clear the purpose of the meetings which should be structured in a way that allows sufficient time to assess the needs of the vulnerable person, and to gain their confidence and trust.
12. They must record and communicate to the ISS any dissatisfaction expressed by the vulnerable person with either the RI or the procedure being followed.
13. They must ensure the vulnerable person is satisfied with the outcome of the assessment and understands the role of the RI, particularly in the context of the court appearance.
14. They must conduct themselves in court in a manner that facilitates complete, accurate and coherent communication between the vulnerable person and the court.
15. They must not change the content of what is being said, or attempt to improve or elaborate what has been said. Any actions that may improve understanding without changing meaning or the sense of what is being said, such as conveying the meaning of gestures the vulnerable person may make, must be taken only with the explicit understanding and consent of the court.
16. They must disclose to the court any difficulties encountered, such as limitations in their professional experience and training, and seek the court’s guidance about action that may be taken that is consistent with best evidence.
17. They must intervene only to seek clarification from the court or to draw the court’s attention to any difficulty the vulnerable person may be experiencing in understanding what is being said or that may be distressing the vulnerable person.
18. They must respect at all times the authority and judgement of the court.
19. They must complete at the conclusion of each assignment an evaluation form that will contribute to efforts to improve the quality of the service.
20. They must recognise that the RI duty to the court remains paramount.
21. They must understand the different obligations regarding data protection, confidentiality, legal professional privilege and disclosure of information between the prosecution and the defence legal teams, and must maintain their professional integrity in relation to these different obligations.
22. When undertaking any case under the RI scheme, the RI is the Data Controller and therefore must be registered with the ICO to undertake such duties in relation to the processing of special category personal data, this must be completed in line with the GDPR (uk) regulations and the Data Protection act 2018.
23. They must notify the ISS immediately of any criminal investigation or proceedings against them, or any other complaint or investigation into their conduct or competence.
24. They must notify the ISS of the result of any adverse Counter Terrorist Check or Access NI disclosure check carried out on them (i.e. any result where a conviction or diversionary disposal is recorded other than already disclosed to the Secretariat).

**Code of Ethics for Northern Ireland Registered Intermediaries**

Definition: In this Code, Northern Ireland Registered Intermediary (RI) means any person who is registered on the Northern Ireland Intermediaries Register as an intermediary in the criminal justice system as specified in Articles 17 and 21BA of the Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, as amended by the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

1. RIs will consider at all times the potential for conflict of interest and the need to act in the public interest, and will conduct themselves responsibly and professionally using reasonable skill and care in the performance of their duties.
2. This includes:
	1. seeking to increase their professional communication skills and knowledge, and their skills as an RI, e.g. court skills, through training and research;
	2. ensuring they have adequate and sustained professional support for their own role;
	3. safeguarding professional standards in every practicable way;
	4. offering other RIs reasonable and appropriate assistance;
	5. respecting the ethics and professional practice of other professions;
	6. endeavouring to the best of their ability to enable communication to be complete, coherent and accurate;
	7. only accepting work for which they are appropriately qualified and they assess to be within their professional competence;
	8. accepting only in exceptional circumstances an assignment for which no entirely suitable RI is available, with such acceptance being subject to the informed consent of all parties;
	9. acknowledging and seeking to overcome in a professional manner, such as through professional advice and guidance or support networks, any unforeseen difficulties or limitations in knowledge or practice that may become apparent in the course of an assignment;
	10. promptly notifying the Intermediaries Scheme Secretariat (ISS) of any matter, including conflict of interest or lack of suitable qualifications and experience, that may disqualify or make it undesirable for them to have continued involvement in the assignment;
	11. treating as confidential any information that may come to them in the course of their work, including the fact of their having undertaken a particular assignment (assignments may be used as evidence for continued registration but not in other circumstances). However, this does not preclude disclosure when legally required to do so or when failure to disclose information could render the RI liable to prosecution;
	12. disclosing before commencing an assignment, or as soon as practicable, any vested or material interest that the RI may have in the assignment;
	13. not using any information or knowledge gained during the course of their work to benefit themselves or anyone else improperly;
	14. not giving advice or offering personal opinions in relation to the evidence presented by the vulnerable witness/defendant or concerning people present during an assignment;
	15. making appropriate efforts to facilitate communication between people who have differing communication and cultural characteristics;
	16. making all reasonable effort to be available for all interviews, meetings, hearings, trials and other appointments for which adequate notice has been given;
	17. not cancelling or postponing meetings that are part of the assignment without good reason and, where possible, the consent of the people concerned; and
	18. respecting the decisions taken by other professionals, particularly criminal justice decisions.

**Northern Ireland Registered Intermediaries Application Guidance Notes**

**General guidance on completion of the application form**

Please read these notes carefully before completing the application form.

The information provided on the application form will be used to shortlist candidates for interview and will also form the basis of any subsequent interview held.

Any applications that are not completed in accordance with the guidance below will **not** be accepted.

All application forms must be typed in Arial font, size 12. Where stated, any maximum word limit must be adhered to. Applications which exceed stated word limits will **not** be accepted.

Applications must be received by **4pm on 17th December 2021**.

***Please also note the dates for interviews and mandatory training.***

Applications can be submitted by **email** to the address below but they must be signed:

DOJ.intermediaries@justice-ni.gov.uk

Applications sent by **post** must be received at the address below by the closing date, 4pm on 17th December 2021:

Intermediaries Schemes Secretariat

Victims, Witness and Judiciary Division

Department of Justice

Room G40

Massey House

Stormont Estate

Belfast, BT4 3SG

Candidates selected for interview will be invited to attend a panel interview during **week commencing Monday 10th January 2022**.

**Applicants who are successful at interview must be available to attend the subsequent mandatory training on all of the following six days:**

* **Monday 31st January to Wednesday 02nd February; and,**
* **Monday 14th February to Wednesday 16th February 2022.**

Applicants will not be registered as intermediaries if they do not pass the training. Please note that re-sits cannot be taken.

All appointments are subject to the requirements of a Counter Terrorist Check and an Access NI Basic Disclosure check being met.

Successful applicants will also have to provide confirmation that they have professional indemnity insurance (you will need to purchase this if you do not already have it).

Applicants will also need to ensure they are registered with the Information Commissioners Office.

**Guidance on specific sections of the application form**

**A4. Previous employment history**

**At least 12 months’ professional experience is required**. It is important that you provide a comprehensive employment history on your application form. Please provide the dates of employment, employer details and the job title/description from leaving full time education up to and including your present employment. Any gaps in your employment history must be fully explained in the box provided. If required, use a continuation sheet clearly marked with the relevant section.

**A5. Referees**

One of your referees should normally be your manager who supports your day-to-day work. If you do not include your present employer as a referee, please explain the reason for your decision. If you are self-employed, please name at least one employer who regularly engages your services (for example, a locum agency or an organisation with whom you have worked).

Both referees should be in a position to speak about your work during the three-year period prior to your application. It is recommended that you ensure that your nominated referees are prepared to provide a reference before you include their details on your application form. This will reduce the likelihood of delays later in the process. References will be requested for candidates who are selected for training.

**A6. Fitness to practice**

Northern Ireland Registered Intermediaries (RIs) will be expected to comply with the RI Code of Practice and Code of Ethics contained in this application pack, so please ensure that you familiarise yourself with them.

Candidates should be aware of the information provided on the time commitment and flexibility required. Those who are unable to meet these requirements should not apply.

The nature of many cases requiring an RI, including child cruelty and sexual offences cases, may be distressing. Potential candidates who have serious reservations about being involved in such cases should consider if they should apply.

**B1. Communication skills**

Candidates are required to specify the areas of communication needs in which they consider themselves to be competent in facilitating communication. These skills areas are organised into generic groupings of communication needs, as well as child, adolescent and adult categories. Candidates should indicate all areas in which they consider themselves to be competent in facilitating communication. Mark only those boxes in which you have proven and demonstrable expertise. Please consider your skills carefully as your self-assessment will be used to match you to a vulnerable person, should you be registered.

The listed main communication skills areas are as follows:

* Young Age (generally aged 7 years old and under)
* Mild/moderate learning disability
* Autistic spectrum disorder
* Severe learning disability
* Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
* Language delay/disorder
* Brain or head injury (including a stroke)
* Mental health issues affecting communication

Communication skills also desirable include:

* Dementia (including Alzheimer’s disease)
* Depression
* Deafness/hearing impairment
* Downs Syndrome
* Aphasia/Dysphasia
* Schizophrenia
* Neurological and progressive disorders (including motor neurone disease and Parkinson’s disease)

The categories aim to cover a range of communication areas. If you feel that you are competent in any other areas which do not fall within the stated categories, please list these in the additional table provided.

**B2. Relevant qualifications**

**B3. Membership of relevant professional bodies**

**Membership of a relevant professional body is required**, for example, the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists or NI Social Care Council.

**B4. Key areas and reasons for applying**

This is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet the key skills required for an RI.

The evidence that you provide in this section will be assessed at the sift stage and will form the basis of any interview. The assessment is based on communication competencies so you do not need to have acted in the role of an RI and you do not need to show any legal knowledge or background. For each example you should clearly demonstrate how you have used the skills required. Your example(s) should clearly explain your role or the issue, what you did and the outcome/results of your actions. Please use a variety of examples when completing your application form.

**A model answer to competence 2 is given below:**

**2. Develop strategies to enable an individual with communication difficulties to understand and communicate accurately and coherently.**

***(What my role/the issue is/was)***

As a Speech and Language Therapist, I work closely with parents, teachers and classroom assistants to ensure smooth transition from nursery into Primary One.

John was a five-year old boy with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) and presented with moderately delayed receptive language and mildly delayed expressive language skills. His mum was anxious regarding his ability to adapt to and understand the new morning routine when starting school as John previously found starting nursery upsetting, resulting in challenging behaviour and poor attendance at nursery.

***(What I did about it)***

After attending additional training specifically on ASD communication strategies, I developed a visual schedule for John specific to his routine. Resources were made using symbolic pictures representing tasks, such as getting dressed, brushing teeth and going to the toilet. I modelled to mum how to use the schedule and this tool was implemented a few weeks prior to John starting school as a preventative strategy.

I also explained my assessment findings to John’s primary school teacher and developed strategies to be used in the classroom to facilitate effective communication. These included: chunking instructions to make them easier for John to understand and allowing him time to process; encouraging John to ask for help; and praising John when he responded appropriately.

***(What the results of my actions were)***

Responding well, John had a better understanding of what was required each morning as mum was able to communicate successfully using the tool. John’s meltdowns reduced as a result. On evaluation of the strategies used in class, when implemented frequently, they were successful in enabling John to understand and to communicate to the best of his ability.

Overall, John’s attendance at school is better than when he was at nursery.

You must spell out very clearly the things that you have personally done, with specific examples which demonstrate that you possess the competencies required of an RI. Assessors are not allowed to ‘read between the lines’ or to infer assumed knowledge about a candidate’s competence to be an RI from their background/employment, history/affiliations, etc. Applications which are framed in general or theoretical terms, without reference to what the candidate has actually done, will not provide the information necessary to demonstrate competence.

Please use a **maximum of 300 words** in each box.

If the word limit is exceeded, only the first 300 words in each box will be considered. Candidates short-listed for interview will have an opportunity to expand on the examples provided and will be asked to provide additional examples.

You also need to provide a summary (in no more than 300 words) of the reasons why you are applying to become an RI. You must include information about the skills and abilities and personal qualities and attributes you can bring to the role. You should also explain to what extent you meet the required time commitment including your flexibility and your ability to take cases at short notice. The information contained in this section will be taken into account in the assessment of your application.

**Equal Opportunities Monitoring**

It is the policy of the Department of Justice that all eligible persons have equal opportunity for employment and advancement.

The Department selects those suitable for appointment solely on the basis of merit without regard to an individual’s religious belief, gender (including gender neutrality), persons with a disability, racial group, marital status, sexual orientation, age, political opinion or persons with dependants. The information provided is confidential to the Department of Justice and we will not publish any data that identifies an individual.

The Monitoring Form will be processed separately and neither the form nor the details contained in it will be available to those considering your application.