

AGRI-FOOD  
& BIOSCIENCES  
INSTITUTE



# afbi

Employee  
Benefits

# AFBI Employee benefits

This employee benefits document will outline the benefits you can expect to receive by working for AFBI.

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## Annual leave

We provide a generous annual leave allowance to all employees which is 5 weeks each year, moving to 6 weeks after 5 years' service.

In addition, all employees are entitled to 12 days public/ privilege holidays each year.

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## Training

Appropriate training will be provided, where required, to enable the successful candidates to carry out the full range of assigned duties.

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## Learning & development

AFBI actively engage with employees to encourage and support professional goals.

We continuously develop our employees with a range of professional and personal development opportunities. Our corporate Learning and Development programme is open to all staff and consists of a number of formal and informal initiatives.

In addition to corporate Learning and Development opportunities, AFBI will encourage you to be proactive and self-direct your own development. Through regular conversations with your line manager you will have the opportunity to discuss and agree future learning needs to help you excel in your new role.

Staff can apply annually to AFBI's Assistance to Study Scheme. The scheme allows staff to complete a recognised educational, academic, vocational, or professional qualification in a subject related to the area of their work. The scheme provides successful applicants with reimbursement of 75% of course fees up to a maximum of £1000, along with a further package of assistance including special leave for exams, assignments, and graduation.



## Family-friendly policies

AFBI has a range of family-friendly policies to allow staff to balance work with the other aspects of their lives. These include part-time working, job-sharing arrangements, flexible working and special leave provisions.

AFBI provides maternity provisions, paternity, parental and adoption leave, many of which are provided at an enhanced rate beyond statutory entitlement.



## Health & wellbeing

We are committed to support each employee where we can throughout their journey with us. To support employees we offer a number of initiatives, including workplace health checks, cost towards flu vaccinations, Occupational Health Services, and the provision of trained Mental Health First Aiders.



## Hybrid working

AFBI has a hybrid working mechanism in place and strive to accommodate those who work in roles that can accommodate home working. The hybrid policy supports employees to have a mixed approach on each week, to work both in the office and at home. Employees can explore this option by submitting an application to request such arrangements via their Head of Branch.



## Inspire workplaces

To support employees we contract Inspire Workplaces who provide support to all employees anonymously. They offer professional counselling sessions and a 24/7 helpline.





## Welfare support / employee assistance

AFBI understands that there may be times when you may need independent advice and help coping with personal or work-related issues that may be affecting your ability to work effectively. To help you with these issues AFBI offer a confidential Welfare Support Service. AFBI also operates an Employee Assistance Programme, delivered through Inspire which provides free independent and confidential counselling, advice and support for any personal or work-related issues.

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## Benenden healthcare

A mutual healthcare society which provides you and your family with access to affordable healthcare products, helping you to take control of your health and wellbeing. See link for more information: <http://www.benenden.co.uk>

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## Employer supported volunteering

AFBI grant special leave with pay up to a maximum of three days on the condition that staff contribute an equivalent amount of their own leave (annual or flexi) to the same voluntary sector organisation for the purposes of volunteering. This is providing there is no adverse impact on official business and no conflict of interest.





## Travel initiatives / car parking

AFBI offer all staff the opportunity to partake in the Cycle to Work Pay and Reward Scheme. Under the Cycle to Work Scheme employees may 'sacrifice' part of their pay in exchange for the use of a bicycle and any associated safety equipment, with the potential to save money on Tax and National Insurance Contributions.

AFBI has seven sites throughout Northern Ireland that all offer free convenient car parking.

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## Pension

We offer an unrivalled pension scheme that will help you beyond your employment with us. All permanent AFBI staff are enrolled into the Northern Ireland Civil Service Scheme from their first day of employment. There is no qualifying or waiting period. Staff contribute between 3 and 8% of salary and AFBI contribute a further 21 to 26% of salary, depending on your rate of pay. Pension contributions are collected before tax, so you also get tax relief at your marginal tax rate on the contributions you pay.

Employee contribution rates for all members from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 are set out below.

Salary thresholds				% contribution rate
2019-2020		2020-2021		
From	To	From	To	
£0	£23,999.99	£0	£24,999.99	4.6%
£24,000.00	£55,499.99	£24,450.00	£56,399.99	5.45%
£55,500.00	£152,499.99	£56,400.00	£153,299.99	7.35%
£152,001.00 and above		£153,300.00 and above		8.05%





## Sick entitlement

We recognise that throughout our lifetime we may experience ill-health. To support you financially and to alleviate stress while recovering from ill-health, AFBI offers a generous sick entitlement to support you until you return to the workplace, fit and well.

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## Death in benefit

In addition to the contribution to your pension pot the scheme also offers a range of benefits to you and your family while you are in work and when you retire. If you die in service the scheme provides valuable life cover to your family in the form of a lump sum and a pension for your dependants. These pension arrangements form a valuable part of your remuneration package. For further information on the available pension options, please visit the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pensions Scheme website.

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## Give as you earn scheme

AFBI support The Charity for Civil Servants, providing (financial) help and advice to serving and former staff of the Civil Service and associated organizations, including AFBI. More information can be viewed at the following link: <https://www.foryoubyyou.org.uk/>



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