



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Job Title:	Assembly Clerk
Salary range:	£57,245 to £58,981
Grade:	Assembly Grade 4
Directorate:	Parliamentary Services
Business Area/Office:	Clerking
Accountable to:	Clerk Assistant
Accountable for:	Senior Assistant Clerk / Assistant Assembly Clerk

Job Purpose

The Clerking business area in the Northern Ireland Assembly directly supports Assembly business in the Chamber and in committees, including scrutiny and legislation.

Assembly Clerks are responsible for providing support for key functions of the Northern Ireland Assembly, including the conduct of Assembly business, the passage of legislation and the work of the Assembly's Committees.

Assembly Clerks lead the delivery of Assembly business, providing clear, accurate and concise written and oral parliamentary advice; often working in real time in a politicised and pressurised environment; and in the public eye.

Assembly Clerks provide advice to senior office holders of the Assembly including the Speaker, Deputy Speakers, Committee Chairs, Members, the Clerk/Chief Executive and the Director of Parliamentary Services. Consequently, excellent political understanding is an essential requirement of the role, together with the ability to develop and maintain highly effective working relationships, particularly with party business managers ('whips') and Members.

Clerks are operationally responsible for the management and performance of their team, and are required to take key operational decisions in respect of same.

The role of Assembly Clerk is both demanding and challenging, operating as it does in a highly pressurised and scrutinised environment, and frequently outside of normal business hours.

Assembly Clerks may be rotated between any of the Assembly Clerk positions in the Bill, Business and Committee Offices.

Job Description:

The main duties and responsibilities of the post are:

- Leading and managing a team, setting goals and performance targets, evaluating staff performance, and ensuring staff are developed to meet the needs of the Assembly;
- Ensuring the best use of resources, including financial resources, by setting, monitoring and ensuring achievement of strategic performance objectives in a high profile and dynamic environment;
- Developing and applying expertise across a range of clerking business areas, keeping up to date on new and emerging policies and developing an understanding of the impact of such policies;
- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with key personnel for example, in Government Departments and agencies, press, media and private and voluntary organisations;
- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with colleagues in other Assembly Secretariat services, including researchers, parliamentary reporters, lawyers, and communication specialists to ensure that the necessary expertise is utilised effectively to support procedural, policy and legislative decisions;
- Providing comprehensive and authoritative advice and guidance on a range of procedural, policy and legislative matters to inform key decision makers. This may include the provision of timely and accurate briefing to the Speaker, Deputy Speakers, Committee Chairpersons, Committees and Members;
- Managing a very demanding and wide-ranging workload of complex tasks, often to be completed within tight deadlines. The nature of issues will be uncertain or problems will have to be dealt with in rapidly changing situations where accurate interpretation, judgement and political awareness is required;
- Preparation of complex briefing documents to support plenary, committee and legislative business;
- Preparation of briefing papers, draft speeches, speaking notes, and press releases for the Speaker, Committee Chairpersons and others and management of online and social media output;
- Planning and managing the committee stage of Bills;
- Planning and managing committee inquiries, including drafting terms of reference and inquiry/scrutiny plans, identifying key stakeholders, organising evidence sessions, analysing evidence and preparing detailed draft committee reports outlining the committee's key findings and recommendations;
- Organising, commissioning and undertaking research to inform scrutiny and/or policy development and preparing requests for legal advice;
- Supporting Members to develop legislative proposals or amendments to legislation by providing procedural, policy development and/or drafting advice;

- Attending plenary sessions of the Assembly to support the Speaker and Deputy Speakers by providing procedural advice and factual responses;
- Comply with the Assembly Commission's Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work policies and procedures; and
- You may also be required to carry out other duties that the Assembly Commission reasonably requires of you.

Essential Criteria:

Applicants for the post must, by the closing date for applications have:

1. A thorough understanding of the role and functions of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the political environment in which it operates including the current challenges facing the Assembly.

AND

2. at least a primary degree, minimum 2:1 classification, in any subject and at least 3 years' experience in each of the areas detailed at (a) – (d). Applications will be considered from applicants with formal qualifications of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated.

OR

3. at least 5 years' experience in each of the areas detailed at (a) – (d).

The experience specified above at 2. and 3. must be in the following areas:

- (a) prioritising, planning and organising a very demanding and diverse workload of complex tasks and managing the resources available to ensure compliance with tight deadlines;
- (b) leading, managing and motivating a team of staff to ensure effective service delivery; taking personal responsibility for the delivery of high quality results and for the improvement and development of both processes and people;
- (c) contributing directly to the development or scrutiny of policy or legislation, including research or consultation and preparing recommendations for change or improvement;
- (d) providing authoritative written and oral advice on complex or politically sensitive matters directly to elected representatives or senior managers.

Shortlisting Criteria:

Should shortlisting be required, the following shortlisting criteria will be applied:

- Applicants must demonstrate 3 years' experience of applying strong analytical and interpretative skills and the ability to produce well-judged decisions/solutions and delivery of complex projects within deadlines.

Skills & Behaviours:

The following Assembly Skills and Behaviours will be assessed during the selection process:

Parliamentary & Political Understanding

...is displaying an appropriate understanding of the wider political environment; what the Assembly does and how our role fits in; and the level of public scrutiny to which the actions and decisions of Assembly staff are exposed. It requires impartiality, integrity and political sensitivity.

Managing & Leading Self and Others

... is setting high standards for ourselves. It is about guiding, motivating and developing others to achieve high performance. It is about engaging others in delivering a corporate vision of excellence, expertise and innovation in support of the Assembly as a legislature.

Building relationships and effective communication

...is creating and maintaining positive, professional and respectful internal and external working relationships through effective and appropriate communications.