



Northern Ireland  
Assembly



# Accountant Assembly Grade 6

Salary range: £39,442 - £40,625 (+ £4,375 supplement)

## Candidate Information Booklet

Completed Application Forms must be submitted no later than 12 noon (UK time) on Monday 30 October 2023

Please retain a copy of this booklet for your reference throughout the selection process.

# Foreword

Thank you for your interest in the position of Accountant at the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission (the Assembly Commission).

The Assembly Commission operates in a dynamic political and legislative environment, and as a newly appointed member of staff, you will be provided with an excellent opportunity to make an important and valued contribution to Assembly business at Parliament Buildings.

As the Accountant, you will play an important role, supporting the work of the Assembly Commission by delivering financial and management accounting services to a range of internal and external stakeholders.

This is an exciting opportunity to join a high-profile organisation with a dedicated and inclusive team.

In turn, we offer a competitive salary, excellent pension provision and a range of other [employee benefits listed on the Recruitment website](#).

Please read the information provided in the candidate information booklet carefully and if you are interested in this exciting post, I would encourage you to submit your application.

If you would like to find out more about the post before making an application please contact [Billy.mahoney@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:Billy.mahoney@niassembly.gov.uk) or telephone 02890 521811.

**Paula McClintock**  
**Head of Finance**

# About Us

The Assembly is at the heart of political and public life as the democratically elected parliament that represents the interests of Northern Ireland and its people.

Established as a key element of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, the Assembly comprises 90 Members and has three main functions - making legislation, scrutinising the Executive and representing constituents.

In accordance with the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the staff, services and facilities which are needed to support the work of the Assembly are provided by the Assembly Commission, a corporate body comprising the Speaker and five Members of the Assembly. The day-to-day running of the Assembly is delegated to the Clerk/Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team.

The Assembly Commission therefore provides the infrastructure (including Parliament Buildings), facilities and staff to allow the Assembly and its Committees to meet and to encourage public awareness of, and engagement with, the parliamentary process. It also pays the salaries of Members and reimburses the expenses which enable them to undertake their duties both at the Assembly and in their constituency offices.

The Assembly Commission is a high-achieving and professional organisation providing impartial support to the Assembly and its Members. The Assembly Commission is independent of the Executive and the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

The Assembly Commission has approximately 370 staff and an annual revenue budget of £51m. [Our organisational structure is illustrated on the Northern Ireland Assembly Recruitment website.](#)

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## **The Person**

As the new Accountant you be responsible for a small number of book-keeping or financial administration staff. You will not only have a practical knowledge of financial or management accounting, but you will have an attention to detail that enables you to accurately analyse and present large amounts of financial information. You will be able to communicate clearly and effectively and able to work in a dynamic and fast-paced environment.

## **About the Role**

The Finance Office offers a range of financial services to the Assembly Commission, the Secretariat, Members and Parties. In order to deliver these services, the Office is comprised of a number of teams.

The Accountant will have responsibility for a number of key functions within the Finance Office, including the supervision of a small team of book-keeping staff or financial administrators. The Accountant has responsibility for a range of functions including the oversight of the accounts payable and accounts receivable processes, the preparation of monthly journals, trial balance reconciliations, VAT returns, undertaking the monthly management accounts process, and working with the Senior Accountants to ensure expenditure is accurately recorded and reported, particularly in relation to Members' expenses and allowances.

The Accountant will assist the Senior Accountants with the preparation of the Interim and Annual Report and Resource Accounts, preparation of the Assembly Members Scheme Pension Accounts and also undertake the administration and maintenance of the computerised accounting systems. The Accountant will be expected to be flexible and work across a number of different functional areas.

## **Core Responsibilities**

The main duties and responsibilities are:

### **Management and Financial Accounts**

- Administration of the monthly internal management accounting processes. This includes running the monthly budget reports and analysing expenditure and variances, and, where appropriate, producing revised forecasts for inclusion in the management accounts considered by the Senior Management Team (SMT);
- Preparing monthly prepayment and accrual journals;
- Assisting with the production of monthly general ledger control account reconciliations. This may include reconciliations of the bank accounts, the net pay control accounts, pension liability control accounts and the VAT control accounts, by analysing transactions and investigating costing errors and unreconciled amounts;
- Assisting with the preparation of the Interim and Annual Report and Resource Accounts, and the Annual Assembly Members Pension Scheme Accounts as required. This may include preparing and posting journals, analysing expenditure reports, reconciling balance sheet accounts and ensuring all postings and analysis are completed in a timely manner;
- Ensuring all audit and corporate governance requirements, in relation to expenditure, are met and updated accordingly. This may include ensuring internal controls are in place, are appropriate and reflect best practice. It will also involve implementing agreed audit recommendations in a timely manner and participating in scheduled internal and external audits.

## **Managing Information**

- Providing reliable, consistent, high quality, timely information on expenditure patterns to internal and external stakeholders;
- Collating and analysing information to assist with the preparation of responses to Assembly Questions, press queries, Freedom of Information requests and reports for Senior Management;
- Undertaking the role of Information Asset Owner by reviewing document management and retention policies and Finance Office privacy notices to ensure they are appropriate, and complied with, and by managing information and records ensuring that all GDPR requirements are met.

## **Team management**

- Supporting the Finance Office Managers in the effective management of the Finance Office and maintaining a positive working environment;
- Managing a team of staff to plan, organise, co-ordinate and monitor the provision of efficient and effective Financial Services to the Assembly Commission, managers, staff, Members and Parties;
- Providing quality assurance of the work of the team, ensuring information and guidance issued is accurate and complies with policies, current legislation or HMRC best practice;
- Supervising the weekly accounts payable processes for administration costs or Members claims and completing the suppliers' payment run, ensuring errors and queries are addressed in a timely manner and service standards are maintained.

## **System Administration and Contract Management**

- Administration and maintenance of the financial accounting system and purchase ordering systems, including maintaining the chart of accounts, maintaining user access control, updating financial tracking information and assisting the team with resolving queries, or assisting end users with operational issues;
- Assisting the Senior Accountants with contract management for the maintenance of the computerised accounting and purchase order systems. This will be undertaken by supporting the contract manager in logging and resolving queries in a timely manner and carrying out system testing following upgrades etc.;
- Assisting the Senior Accountants with the management of the banking and insurance brokering contracts, dealing with administration of insurance claims and assisting with the procurement of either contract at the end of the current term.

## **General**

- Maintaining an up-to date understanding of current public sector accounting requirements under the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) regime and ensuring continual professional development is undertaken for the qualifications noted below;
- Interpreting and applying a number of key corporate policies, ensuring guidance is up to date and that the policies are correctly applied by staff. Assisting with policy development;
- Complying with all of the Assembly Commission's staff policies and procedures including Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work policies and procedures and all mandatory training requirements;
- Contributing to the delivery of appropriate projects through participation in working groups or providing advice as required; and



- Carrying out any other duties which may be required by the Assembly Commission.

## **Essential Criteria**

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

1. Successfully completed the professional examinations and be a full current member of one of the Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies listed below:
  - (a) The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants;
  - (b) The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland;
  - (c) The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland;
  - (d) The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales;
  - (e) The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants; or
  - (f) The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.
2. At least one years' post\* qualification experience of preparing financial or management accounts for a public, commercial or voluntary sector organisation in accordance with the IFRS regime as adopted for the UK;
3. At least one years' experience in monitoring budgets and reporting on the allocation of resources for a public, commercial or voluntary sector organisation;
4. Experience using computerised accounting software and Microsoft Office packages, to include MS Word, Excel and Outlook, to analyse and present financial information to non-financial stakeholders.

\* "Post-qualification" experience will be deemed to have commenced from the date on which applicants are admitted to full membership of one of the professional bodies referred to at 1 above, having fully satisfied all the criteria for membership.

## **Shortlisting Criteria**

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

Experience of maintaining and developing core\*\* computerised financial and/or management accounting systems.

\*\*"core computerised financial and/or managing accounting" systems should be taken to refer to multi-ledger software packages (including a sales, purchase and general ledgers) used to produce financial statements or management accounts. This should not be taken to refer to Microsoft packages.

## **Assembly Skills & Behaviours**

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

### **Delivering a quality service**

...is about providing a high-quality and efficient service to our customers. It is thinking ahead, managing resources effectively and delivering work on time and to a high standard. It is also using professional or technical expertise to enhance service delivery.

### **Building relationships and effective communication**

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

### **Initiating improvement and delivering change**

...is looking for and being open to new and innovative ideas and improvements to the service provided. It is being flexible and adapting positively and professionally to sustain performance when the situation changes, workloads increase or priorities change. It is about forming sound, evidence-based decisions and being accountable for results.

## **Managing and 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.

## **Equal Opportunities Statement**

The Assembly Commission is committed to equality of opportunity in employment and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified applicants irrespective of religious belief, political opinion, race, age, gender, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or people with dependents or without. **All applications for employment will be considered on the basis of merit.**

## **Location**

The successful applicant will be based in Parliament Buildings, Belfast. The role offers hybrid working whereby staff will have the opportunity to work from home for part of the week.

## **Completing the form**

Only the information presented in the application form will be considered by the selection panel. CVs or other supplementary material will not be accepted in place of, or in addition to, completed application forms. Completed online forms must be submitted by **12 noon (UK time) on Monday 30 October 2023.**

**[Launch the application portal and complete the application form.](#)**

**Application forms submitted after the closing time and date will not be accepted.**

## **Recruitment and Selection Framework**

There are five elements within the Recruitment and Selection Framework:

**Experience** – the knowledge or mastery of an activity or subject gained through involvement in or exposure to it.

**Ability** – the aptitude or potential to perform to the required standard.

**Technical** – the demonstration of specific professional skills, knowledge or qualifications.

**Assembly Skills and Behaviours** – the actions and activities that people do which result in effective performance in a job.

**Strengths** – the things we do regularly, do well and that motivate us.

The elements that will be assessed for this role are Experience, Technical and Assembly Skills and Behaviours and the selection method(s) that will be used are detailed below. Further information on the [Recruitment and Selection Framework](#) are included in the [Guidance on Recruitment and Selection for Applicants](#).

## **Stages of the Selection Process**

### **Eligibility Sift**

The essential criteria reflect the experience and knowledge that an applicant must possess in order to be able to undertake the role. An eligibility sift will be carried out on the basis of the information contained in the essential criteria section of the application form. You must therefore demonstrate clearly in your form how, and to what extent, you meet with the essential criteria for the post.

### **Shortlisting**

The Selection panel reserve the right to use shortlisting as part of the selection process for this post. Should shortlisting be used, the shortlisting criterion listed above will be applied. The selection panel reserve the right to set a minimum

standard for the shortlisting criterion and/or to only invite those who score highest in the shortlisting criterion to the next stage of the selection process. If shortlisting is not necessary, all applicants who have demonstrated the essential criteria will proceed to the next stage of the selection process.

### **Interview Stage**

Applicants invited to interview which will assess the information contained in this booklet.

**Interviews are planned for week commencing: 20 November 2023**

### **Further Interview Stage**

The selection panel reserves the right to hold a further interview stage if deemed necessary.

**Further information on the Recruitment and Selection process is available in the [Recruitment and Selection Framework](#) and [Guidance on Recruitment and Selection for Applicants](#).**

### **Guaranteed Interview Scheme**

The Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) supports applicants with disabilities or those with a long-term impairment or health condition, that is expected to last for at least 12 months and which means that they cannot meet the shortlisting criteria. In these instances, provided that they have demonstrated in their application form that they meet the essential criteria for the role, the applicant will be invited to interview. If you are applying under GIS it is therefore important that you include all relevant information in your application form. You should refer to the Guidance on Recruitment and Selection for Applicants for more information.

When considering applications made under GIS, the Human Resources Office reserves the right to request medical information from the applicant's general practitioner (through the applicant and with their consent).

If you are disabled and consider that you require reasonable adjustments to

enable you to participate in any part of the selection process, please indicate this on the application or contact us at [recruitment@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@niassembly.gov.uk).

You can get advice or assistance with making an application from your local Jobs and Benefits Office – contact details are available on NIDirect:

[Find contact details for your local Jobs and Benefits Office.](#)

## **Key Employee Benefits**

We offer an annual leave allowance of 25 days, increasing by one day per year up to a maximum of 30 days. In addition, we offer 12 days of public and privilege holidays.

The Assembly Commission will enrol you into the Civil Service Pension Scheme from the first day of employment. Staff contribute between 4 and 9% of salary and the Assembly Commission contributes a further 28 to 35% of salary, depending on your rate of pay.

We also offer a range of non-salary benefits which include hybrid working; supportive family friendly policies; flexi-time; health and wellbeing initiatives including an Employee Assistance Programme; supported learning and development; Cycle to Work Scheme; Payroll Giving; and volunteering opportunities.

The successful applicant will be given suitable training, including formal specialised courses as necessary.

[View further details of our employee benefits.](#)

## **Terms and Conditions of Appointment**

This is a permanent appointment. The successful candidate will be an employee of the Assembly Commission. All appointments are subject to the satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period.

The standard working week is 37 hours, (excluding meal breaks). Working hours will be dictated by the mode of operation of the Assembly and may involve work

into late evenings and on occasions, at weekends and on public holidays.

The taking of annual leave will be influenced by the Finance Office reporting timetable.

## **Equality Monitoring**

Under Fair Employment legislation, we are required to monitor the community background and gender of those applying for jobs. You must therefore complete the equal opportunities monitoring section of the application form when applying for the post.

## **Merit List**

The merit list of applicants deemed to be appointable will remain “live” for 18 months from the date it is signed and may be used to fill any further permanent or fixed term opportunities for the same post.

## **Communication during the recruitment process**

The Assembly Recruitment Team will issue most communication electronically. You should therefore regularly check your email account to make sure you do not miss any important communication. Please note, sometimes the Recruitment Team emails are automatically filtered as spam by email providers.

## **Further Information**

If you require more information on the recruitment process, please contact the Assembly Recruitment Team on 02890 521741.

Further information about the Assembly can be obtained on the [Northern Ireland Assembly website](#).

**The Candidate Information Booklet does not constitute any term or condition of employment.**