



Northern Ireland  
Assembly



# Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk AG5

£50,684 - £52,213

## Candidate Information Booklet

Completed Application Forms must be submitted no later  
than 12 noon (UK time) on 12 April 2024

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

# Foreword

Thank you for your interest in the position of Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk (Assembly Grade 5) in the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission (the Assembly Commission).

The Assembly operates in a dynamic political and parliamentary environment, and as a newly appointed Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk, you will be provided with an excellent opportunity to make an important and valued contribution to Assembly business at Parliament Buildings.

Working at the Assembly offers a rewarding career. The Clerking business area in the Northern Ireland Assembly directly supports Assembly business in the chamber and in committees, including scrutiny and legislation.

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

In turn, we offer a competitive salary. We offer excellent pension provision where you contribute between 4 and 9% of salary and the Assembly Commission contributes a further 28 to 34% of salary, depending on your rate of pay. From 1 April 2024, you will benefit from an employer contribution rate of 34.25% of your salary.

We offer an annual leave allocation 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. We also offer 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 [Frank.Geddis@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:Frank.Geddis@niassembly.gov.uk) or telephone 02890 521233.



**Gareth McGrath**  
**Director of Parliamentary Services**

# 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 (SMT).

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.](#)

# Contents

About the Role.....	2
The Person.....	2
Core Responsibilities.....	2
Essential Criteria.....	5
Shortlisting Criteria .....	5
Assembly Skills and Behaviours.....	6
Equal Opportunities Statement.....	7
Location.....	7
Completing the form .....	7
Recruitment and Selection Framework.....	8
Stages of the Selection Process.....	8
Disability Confident.....	10
Key Employee Benefits.....	11
Terms and Conditions of Appointment.....	11
Equality Monitoring .....	12
Merit List.....	12
Communication during the recruitment process .....	12
Further Information .....	12

## **About the Role**

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

Senior Assistant Assembly Clerks are responsible for providing support for important functions of the Assembly, including the conduct of Assembly business, the passage of legislation and the work of the Assembly committees.

The role of Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk is both demanding and challenging, operating in a highly pressurised and scrutinised environment, and occasionally outside of normal business hours.

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

## **The Person**

You may previously have worked effectively within a team in the past, or be able and willing to do so as a new Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk, and you should have the ability to communicate clearly and effectively as you carry out your new and important role.

You must also be willing and keen to adopt a customer facing focus, as you engage with a wide range of people involved within business at Parliament Buildings.

## **Core Responsibilities**

The main duties and responsibilities of the post are:

- Providing or contributing to the provision of timely, accurate and authoritative advice, guidance and briefing on a range of procedural, policy and legislative matters relating to or arising from the work of the business unit to senior decision makers such as the Speaker, Committee

Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons, Members, and senior managers (defined as AG4 and above).

- Preparing or contributing to written and oral advice for the Speaker on items of business tabled by Members, for approval by the Assembly Clerk (where required).
- Supporting Members to develop legislative proposals or amendments to legislation by providing written and oral procedural, policy development and/or drafting advice, under the direction of the Assembly Clerk.
- Under the direction of the Assembly Clerk, preparing draft amendments for Members/Committees and plenary briefs for the amending stages of Bills for the Speaker, for approval by the Assembly Clerk.
- Preparing or assisting in the preparation of draft speeches, speaking notes, and press releases for the Speaker, Committee Chairpersons, Deputy Chairpersons and others, to inform debates in plenary or for events outside the chamber or the Assembly.
- Under the direction of the Assembly Clerk and within the business unit, clerking committee meetings or sub-committee meetings, if required, and providing written and oral advice to Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons at external meetings and events.
- Preparing inquiry/scrutiny plans and draft committee reports for approval by the Assembly Clerk.
- Undertaking or commissioning research into key areas of interest to Members and committees to inform future work such as policy scrutiny, committee inquiries, private member's legislation or the drafting of legislative amendments.
- Preparing draft requests for legal advice.
- Leading, managing and developing individual staff members or a small team to ensure the delivery of team objectives and front line services to a range of stakeholders, including by providing appropriate induction, training and development as required.
- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with key stakeholders including Members, officials from Executive departments and agencies,

other legislatures, private and voluntary organisations, and members of the public to inform the conduct of Assembly business.

- Editing, scrutinising and clearing items of business tabled by Members e.g. Assembly Questions.
- Contributing to the planning and delivery of corporate and directorate projects by providing draft papers, participating in working groups and performing other duties as allocated by the Clerk Assistant/Assembly Clerk.
- Leading on the development, review and delivery of specific projects and work streams within the particular business unit under the direction of the Assembly Clerk.
- Quality assuring the work of staff to ensure compliance with legislation, Standing Orders and other procedural guidance in order to meet agreed service standards.
- Ensuring the best use of resources, including financial budgets, by making recommendations to manage this, under the direction of the Assembly Clerk.
- Checking and approving purchase orders and invoices in line with organisational policy and within approval levels.
- Effectively using Microsoft Office and bespoke internal Assembly software systems and databases to carry out work.
- Managing information and records in accordance with established policies and statutory requirements.
- 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.
- Carrying out other duties that the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission reasonably requires of you.



## **Essential Criteria**

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

1. At least a primary degree, minimum 2:2 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**

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

The experience specified above at 1. and 2. must be in the following areas:

- a) Prioritising, planning and organising a demanding and diverse workload to ensure compliance with deadlines;
- b) Managing, developing and motivating staff to ensure effective service delivery;
- c) Providing authoritative written and oral advice on complex or politically sensitive matters to elected representatives or senior managers;
- d) Developing and maintaining effective working relationships with key stakeholders such as senior managers, elected representatives, departmental officials, and other external stakeholders, which support the delivery of objectives.

## **Shortlisting Criteria**

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

2 years' experience of contributing directly to the development or scrutiny of policy or legislation, including research or consultation and preparing recommendations for change or improvement

## **Assembly Skills and 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.

### **Parliamentary and 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.

## **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 Assembly Commission operates a Hybrid Working Policy and the balance between working in Parliament Buildings and working at home will vary depending on the post, business need and the preference of the member of staff within the parameters of the Policy.

## **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 **12 April 2024**.

**[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, Ability, Assembly Skills and Behaviours and Strengths 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**

### **Online Testing**

Online testing may be used as a shortlisting tool. Invitation to test does not imply that an applicant possesses the essential criteria. The tests will be held online and instructions and further information will be issued to applicants after the closing date for applications on 12 April 2024. Only those applicants who meet the minimum standard and who score highest in the tests, will be considered for the next stage of the selection process: the eligibility sift.

**Online testing (if required) is planned for week commencing 15 April 2024**

## **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 at page 5 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.

## **Assessment Stage**

As part of this stage of the selection process, applicants will be required to complete:

- a) a written exercise;
- b) an interview, which will address the information contained in the Job Specification and will assess elements of the Recruitment and Selection Framework; and
- c) the preparation and delivery of a presentation to the selection panel.

## Disability Confident

The Assembly Commission is a Disability Confident Committed Employer and for our recruitment, we have committed to:

- ensuring our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible;
- communicating and promoting vacancies;
- offering an interview to disabled people who meet the essential criteria for the job (the Guaranteed Interview Scheme); and
- anticipating and providing reasonable adjustments as required.

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 by offering an interview to disabled people who meet the essential criteria for the job. 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.

If an assessment or test is used as a shortlisting tool, then applicants applying under GIS will not be required to complete the assessment or test and will be offered a guaranteed interview, provided that they demonstrate in their application form that they meet the essential criteria for the role.

In instances where an assessment or test forms part of the selection process and is not a shortlisting tool, then all applicants must meet the minimum standard required for that assessment or test, including those applying under GIS.

If you wish to submit your application under the GIS, or if you require adjustments to enable you to participate in any part of the selection process, please indicate this on the application form or contact us at [recruitment@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@niassembly.gov.uk). **Please note that you will be required to provide written confirmation of your disability or long-term health condition from a general practitioner or an appropriate specialist, by the closing date for applications.**

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 a competitive salary, excellent pension provision and generous annual leave allowance.

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.

As an equal opportunities employer, we are happy to talk about the possibility of flexible working in this role with the successful applicant.

[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 will involve work into late evenings and on occasions, at weekends and on public holidays.

The taking of annual leave may be influenced by the Parliamentary 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 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 521689 or email us at [recruitment@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@niassembly.gov.uk).

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.**