



Northern Ireland
Assembly



Communications and Digital Content Officer

£50,684 - £52,213

Candidate Information Booklet

Completed Application Forms must be submitted no later
than **12 noon (UK time) on 21 June 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 Communications and Digital Content Officer Assembly Grade 5 (two posts) in the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission (the Assembly Commission).

The Assembly operates in a dynamic political and parliamentary environment, and as a newly appointed Communications and Digital Content Officer, you will be provided with an excellent opportunity to make an important and valued contribution reflecting Assembly business at Parliament Buildings and beyond.

Working at the Assembly offers a rewarding career. In this role you will take a leading role in projecting and explaining the work of the Assembly in a range of formats and to a range of audiences. You will use tested and emerging technologies to increase our engagement with the public and help ensure an accurate and informed reflection of our work in the mainstream media.

Coming up with creative ideas to promote what is an overwhelmingly positive message for the public makes this a very special position to aspire to take up.

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 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 joanne.murdoch@niassembly.gov.uk or telephone 02890 51744.



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	3
Essential Criteria.....	5
Shortlisting Criteria	6
Assembly Skills and Behaviours.....	6
Equal Opportunities Statement.....	7
Location	8
Completing the form	8
Recruitment and Selection Framework	8
Stages of the Selection Process.....	9
Disability Confident.....	10
Key Employee Benefits.....	11
Terms and Conditions of Appointment	12
Equality Monitoring	12
Merit List	12
Communication during the recruitment process	12
Further Information	13

About the Role

The Communications Office provides and publishes information to support the public in understanding, valuing, and engaging with the Northern Ireland Assembly; delivering accessible information on the issues being considered; and encouraging participation of citizens.

The Communications and Digital Content Officer is responsible for providing information on and creating content about the work of the Assembly, including its Committees and the Assembly Commission, to stakeholders, the media and the wider public. The post holder will be engaged in telling our story; delivering information that is clear and timely; and creating and responding to citizen interest.

The post holder will be responsible for assisting in the development of a digital engagement strategy and future broadcasting solutions to make the work of the Assembly more accessible. There are two Communications and Digital Content Officer roles within the Communications Office leading tasks and projects whilst acting as inspiring team leaders. It is anticipated that one Communications and Digital Officer will take the lead on digital content and the other post will take the lead on liaising with and directing the Assembly Broadcasting team and that there will be significant overlap and shared responsibility in flexibly delivering these roles. This job description outlines the level of responsibilities which the post holder will be expected to undertake across a range of tasks within the Communications Office.

The Person

You will be an experienced communications professional with previous experience in leading teams or communications projects. You will be an enthusiastic professional who gets satisfaction from applying your skills to delivering engaging communication's outputs and keeping up to date with new ways of delivering them in the digital environment

You must also be willing and keen to adopt a customer facing focus, as you

engage and work collaboratively and creatively – both across and beyond your own team.

Core Responsibilities

As a Communications and Digital Content Officer, and member of the Communications Office, your duties will include:

Communications

- Responding to and overseeing responses to media enquiries in a timely and professional manner including working with Heads of Business, Directors, the Clerk/Chief Executive's Office and the Speaker's Office to provide appropriate information and sign-off.
- Advising and assisting Committee Chairs and senior management on traditional and social-media strategy and outputs.
- Writing high quality and engaging media releases and social media copy.
- Shaping and delivering publicity campaigns to achieve engagement for Assembly Committees on issues before them.
- Overseeing and managing weekly briefs and digital outputs on forthcoming Assembly business and events of interest with a view to growing engagement.
- Developing and building relationships with key journalists, influencers, party press officers and media outlets in order to maximise coverage of the Assembly and its work.
- Ensuring that information provided on the work of the Assembly is accurate and up to date by monitoring, reviewing and updating information on the website and other channels.
- Providing timely and accurate answers to enquiries from the Speaker and the Assembly Commission which may include written and oral briefings.
- Providing advice and guidance to Committee Chairpersons and staff on dealing with the media and how best to maximise social media and emerging platforms use.

- Preparing Committee Chairpersons and Assembly Commission Members ahead of radio and TV interviews and prepare lines to take.
- Acting as the Complaints Officer responsible for implementing the Complaints Policy, compiling the Complaints Register and providing yearly submissions to the Senior Management Team and the Assembly Commission;
- Use and advise on the use of latest technologies and related kit to lead on the creation of cost-effective digital content in video and audio formats

Digital Content

- Gathering digital material for social media outputs.
- Planning, gathering and preparing visually stimulating and engaging material for online publication via the Assembly website and social media channels reflecting the positive work in Parliament Buildings and beyond.
- Creating and coordinating social media content for use in marketing campaigns, Committee promotions and Assembly events.
- Planning, oversight and preparation of engaging material for online publication via the Assembly website and social media channels reflecting the work of the Assembly in Parliament Buildings and beyond.
- Working with the Head of Communications to deliver new and exciting ways of projecting the work of the Assembly in the digital environment.

Broadcasting

- Acting as first point of liaison of the Assembly's Broadcasting requirements in relation to issues management, project spend and service requests.
- Assist in Project management development in broadcasting related initiatives as required in order to improve accessibility of material to the public and deliver long term efficiencies.

General responsibilities

- Leading, motivating and developing staff and evaluating staff performance
- Manage budgets in relation to areas of core responsibility and provide returns in line with Assembly financial frameworks.
- Assist Head of Communications in drafting business cases and associated papers for the Senior Management Team. Drafting documentation in preparation for procurement competitions.
- Comply 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.
- Managing information and records in accordance with established policies and statutory requirements.
- You may also be required to carry out other duties that the Assembly Commission reasonably requires of you.

Essential Criteria

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

1. A degree in a related subject such as Journalism, Media Studies, Public Relations, Communications

AND

At least 3 years' experience in the areas specified at a) – e) below;

OR

2. A third level qualification in a related discipline such as Journalism, Media Studies, Public Relations, Communications and membership of a professional body such as the Institute of Public Relations.

AND

At least 3 years' experience in the areas specified at a) – e) below;

OR

3. At least 5 years' experience in the areas specified at a) – e) below:
 - a. Working in a Communications Office, broadcasting or public relations environment regularly providing content for publication.
 - b. Providing communications advice to management teams and planning and implementing social media campaigns to support corporate messaging.
 - c. Managing, developing and motivating staff to ensure effective service delivery and effective use of resources.
 - d. Creation of high-quality content for social media and digital platforms using relevant editorial tools and technology.
 - e. Responding to inquiries from the media against tight deadlines delivering responses in support of reputational enhancement.

Shortlisting Criteria

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

One year's experience of handling political sensitivities when dealing with the media, elected representatives, senior managers or members of the public.

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 21 June 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, Technical, 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 instead of using a shortlisting criterion. Invitation to testing does not imply that an applicant possesses the essential criteria. The tests, if required, will be held online and instructions and further information will be issued to applicants after the closing date for applications. 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 the period: 26 - 28 June 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 6 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 and Interview Stage

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

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

Applicants invited to interview will be assessed using the Essential Criteria, Strengths and Assembly Skills and Behaviours as outlined above.

Interviews are planned for 1st and 2nd August 024

Further Interview Stage

The Selection Panel reserves the right to hold a further interview stage if deemed necessary.

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. **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 will 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 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 or email us at 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.