



Northern Ireland
Assembly



Assistant Assembly Clerk - Clerking Assembly Grade 6

£42,345 - £43,575

Candidate Information Booklet

Completed Application Forms must be submitted no later than 12 Noon (UK time) on Monday 18 November 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 Assistant Assembly Clerk in the Northern Ireland Assembly (the Assembly). This position is based in the Clerking Business Area, within the Parliamentary Services Directorate.

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

As an Assistant Assembly Clerk you will play an important role in supporting the parliamentary process, committees and plenary meetings of the Assembly. This role involves working frequently with Members of the Legislative Assembly (Members), as well as a range of other internal and external stakeholders.

In turn, we offer a competitive salary. We offer excellent pension provision where you contribute between 4.6 and 8.05% of salary and the Assembly Commission will contribute a further 34.25%.

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 Peter.Hall@niassembly.gov.uk or telephone 02890 521799.



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.

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 and our staff are not civil servants.

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

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About the Role

The Assistant Assembly Clerk role includes the provision of support for the parliamentary process, committees and plenary business of the Assembly. This role involves working frequently with Members of the Legislative Assembly (Members), as well as a range of other internal and external stakeholders.

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

Core Responsibilities

As an Assistant Assembly Clerk and member of the Parliamentary Services team, you will primarily work in Clerking (Bill Office, Business Office, Clerking and Member Support Office or committees of the Assembly). Some of your duties will include:

- 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.
- Assisting the Assembly Clerk/Senior Assistant Clerk(s) in developing and providing briefing papers and advice on procedural and other matters relating to the management of Assembly business.
- Drafting outgoing correspondence and reports for publication in line with Assembly standards and accessibility guidance.
- Undertaking research and investigatory work, providing timely and accurate analysis and recommendations to assist with complex issues relating to plenary and committee scrutiny of legislation, policies, reports and briefing documents.
- Supporting processing of primary legislation at each stage, including

monitoring plenary, processing amendments and providing advice and draft briefing on procedural issues for the Assembly Clerk/Senior Assistant Clerk, facilitating the tabling of amendments and the publication of Bills and Acts.

- Engaging with departments and other stakeholders to manage issues in the conduct of plenary proceedings, the management of legislation and the conduct of committee business under the direction of the Assembly Clerk/Senior Assistant Clerk.
- Supporting plenary sittings, including monitoring and overseeing the progress of those sittings, taking remedial action where necessary to ensure their smooth conduct; and reviewing those sittings in order to identify issues which need to be considered and addressed. Preparing initial drafts of key documents including speeches for Members etc.
- Ensuring the accurate and timely production of minutes for committee meetings for publication, to reflect the key decisions and actions of the Committee.
- Taking part, as required, in meetings and discussions with committee chairs and Assembly Members.
- Supporting the Assembly Clerk/Senior Assistant Clerk(s) in assisting the scrutiny of legislation both in committee meetings and in plenary, including the first draft of a committee report on a bill.
- Attending, participating in and managing meetings, visits and other events in support of the work of the Assembly; ensuring these are carried out effectively and that accurate records of business are maintained.
- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with key stakeholders, including Members, colleagues from across the Assembly Commission, officials from Executive departments, other external stakeholders and members of the public.

- Drafting and approving information for publication on social media platforms and the Assembly webpages and ensuring that this information is up to date and fit for purpose e.g. managing the Committee's social media account.
- Quality assuring the work of staff to ensure compliance with legislation, Standing Orders and other procedural guidance in order to meet agreed service standards.
- Checking and approving purchase orders and invoices in line with organisational policy and within approval levels.
- Assisting the Assembly Clerk/Senior Assistant Clerk in the management of financial budgets as required.
- Effectively using Microsoft Office and bespoke internal Assembly software systems and databases to carry out work including the production of reports and documents.
- Managing information and records in accordance with established policies and statutory requirements.
- Contributing to the delivery of appropriate projects through participation in working groups and providing advice as requested.
- 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.
- 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. This requires impartiality, integrity and political sensitivity.
- Carrying out other duties that the Assembly Commission reasonably requires of you.

The Person

As a new Assistant Assembly Clerk you will manage and lead a team. You will take responsibility for a professional and high-quality approach to your work, building of trust with colleagues, respecting the importance of discretion and integrity, and working closely across teams to achieve best outcomes.

You should have the ability to communicate clearly and effectively as you carry out your new and important role and 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.

Essential Criteria

Applicants for the post 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) Leading and managing individual staff members or a team of staff to ensure the quality, accuracy and timeliness of work.
- b) Analysing information from a range of sources to develop high quality written documents which support and inform effective decision making.
- c) Planning and organising a diverse workload, delivering high quality work to tight deadlines and in line with organisational policy and procedures.
- d) Developing and maintaining positive working relationships including through effective communication with a wide range of stakeholders (such as colleagues, managers, elected representatives, departmental officials, or other external stakeholders) to deliver a high-quality service.

Shortlisting Criterion

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

Experience of providing accurate, evidence-based and impartial advice or guidance to stakeholders (such as colleagues, managers, elected representatives, departmental officials, or other external stakeholders) on complex or sensitive issues.

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.

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.

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.

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. Applications from people from minority ethnic communities and young people (people under the age of 35) are particularly welcomed for this post. **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.

The role offers hybrid working whereby staff will have the opportunity to work remotely 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 18 November 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. 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. Only those applicants who meet the minimum standard and who score highest in the test(s), will be considered for the next stage of the selection process: the eligibility sift.

Online testing, if required, is planned for: 26 November to 1 December 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.

Written Assessment Stage

Applicants who pass the eligibility sift will be invited to the assessment stage of the selection process.

For this stage of the selection process, applicants will be required to complete a written analysis exercise.

Written Assessments are planned for week commencing: 6 January 2025

Interview Stage

All applicants who complete the written exercise will be invited to attend an interview. The interview will address the information contained in this information booklet and will assess elements of the [Recruitment and Selection Framework](#).

Interviews are planned for: 22-29 January 2025

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 pre-appointment enquiries which include an Access NI basic check and 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.