



Northern Ireland
Assembly



Assembly Clerk Assembly Grade 4

£66,376 - £68,349

Candidate Information Booklet

Completed Application Forms must be submitted no later
than 12 noon (UK time) on Monday 19 May 2025

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

Foreword

Thank you for your interest in the position of Assembly Clerk in the Northern Ireland Assembly (the Assembly).

The Assembly operates in a complex and dynamic political and parliamentary environment, frequently in the public eye. As a newly appointed 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. Working at the Assembly offers a rewarding career, and this is an exciting opportunity to join a high-profile and leading organisation with a dedicated and inclusive team.

In turn, we offer a competitive salary. We offer excellent pension provision, where you contribute 7.35% 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 this 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 role of Clerk before making an application, please contact Paul Gill (Clerk Assistant) at paul.gill@niassembly.gov.uk or telephone 028 9052 1008.



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 makes laws, scrutinises the work of the Executive and represents the views of the public. It is the prime source of authority in respect of all devolved responsibilities.

The **Assembly Commission** enables the successful operation of the Assembly by providing the staff, services and facilities which are needed to support parliamentary business. The Assembly Commission is a body corporate, comprising the Speaker and five Members of the Assembly. The Assembly Commission delegates the day-to-day running of the Assembly to the Clerk/Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team (SMT).

The priorities of the Assembly Commission, as set out in its [Corporate Strategy 2023 - 2028](#), are that:

- The Assembly will be empowered to achieve its full potential.
- The public will understand and value the role of the Assembly and be engaged in its work.
- Our staff will be a motivated, resilient and expert team.
- Our systems and facilities will be modern, secure and efficient.

The Assembly Commission is a high-achieving and professional organisation, providing impartial support to the Assembly and its Members.

The Assembly Commission has approximately 400 staff and an annual budget of £67m and is independent of the Executive and the Civil Service. [The organisational structure is illustrated on the recruitment website.](#)

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The Person

This is an exciting opportunity to work at the Assembly, the parliament for Northern Ireland.

We are seeking highly motivated, talented and versatile individuals who are dedicated to providing an excellent service in an exciting, complex and dynamic political environment. Successful candidates will act with integrity and provide robust and well-considered advice, frequently in the public eye, to a range of important officeholders at the Assembly and must be passionate about working collaboratively and delivering innovation and improvement in their work.

About the Role

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

Assembly Clerks (Clerks) are responsible for providing advice, guidance and support for key functions of the Assembly, including the conduct of Assembly business, the development and passage of legislation and the work of the Assembly's Committees.

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

Clerks also provide advice to senior office holders of the Assembly including the Speaker, Deputy Speakers, committee chairs, Members, Clerk/Chief Executive, the Director of Parliamentary Services and Clerk Assistants. Consequently, excellent political understanding as well as outstanding judgement are essential to 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, development and performance of their team. The role of Clerk is both demanding and challenging,

with some demand for work outside of normal business hours in order to meet tight timelines.

A Clerk supports all elements of parliamentary work – there are opportunities in assisting the Speaker and Deputy Speakers in the Chamber on Assembly business; advising on legislation and supporting Members as they shape the laws which affect us all; and underpinning the work of Members in Committees as they scrutinise the work of the Executive, take evidence and conduct inquiries on key issues such as health, education and justice.

Excellent political understanding as well as outstanding judgement are essential to the role, together with the ability to develop and maintain highly effective working relationships, particularly with party business managers ('whips') and Members.

Core Responsibilities

Clerks lead and manage small teams of staff (typically three to four staff) in order to discharge their duties and responsibilities. The main duties and responsibilities of the post of Clerk, working with their teams, are set out under each of the Assembly Commission's values:

Excellence

"... is about an unstinting commitment to quality, high standards and empowerment within the organisation. We take responsibility individually and collectively for a professional and high-quality approach to our work."

1. **Providing comprehensive and authoritative high-quality written and oral advice and guidance** on procedural, policy and parliamentary matters to key decision makers.
2. **Managing a very demanding and wide-ranging workload of complex tasks**, often to tight deadlines and in accordance with high service standards.
3. **Quality assuring the work of staff** to ensure compliance with legislation,

Standing Orders, and other procedural guidance.

4. **Leading, managing and developing a team**, setting goals and performance targets, evaluating staff performance, and ensuring staff are developed to meet the needs of the Assembly.

Positivity

“... reflects that parliamentary life requires flexibility and proactive approaches to innovating and solving problems. We recognise the value in each person’s impact on what the Assembly does.”

5. **Planning and managing committee inquiries**, including drafting terms of reference, scoping, and producing detailed evidence-based reports.
6. **Managing the scrutiny of legislation**, providing responsive advice and guidance to Members under pressure and in dynamic contexts.
7. **Identifying opportunities to improve business processes** and working with digital teams to test and iterate software solutions to support parliamentary business.

Integrity

“... is about the personal qualities we display which shape our culture—impartiality, equality of service, building trust, discretion.”

8. **Clerking committee meetings**, providing impartial written and oral briefings to chairpersons and Members.
9. **Supporting Members to develop legislative proposals or amendments**, ensuring impartial, discreet and procedurally sound advice is provided.
10. **Preparing requests for legal advice** and managing information and records in accordance with statutory and internal governance standards.

Collaboration

“... captures the need to work closely together across teams to achieve the best outcomes, recognising interdependency and the need to draw upon all of our available skills.”

11. **Developing and maintaining effective relationships with colleagues in other Assembly Commission services** (e.g., researchers, lawyers, communications staff) to ensure a joined-up approach to procedural and legislative support.
12. **Developing, managing and maintaining relationships with a diverse range of external stakeholders**, including Members, senior officials, and the voluntary and private sectors.
13. **Contributing to the planning and delivery of corporate and directorate projects**, including leading cross-functional teams where appropriate.

[View the full Job Description for the role of Clerk.](#)

Essential Criteria

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications, have at least 5 years' experience in each of the essential criteria detailed at (a) – (e).

- (a) Providing authoritative and high-quality written and oral advice on complex or politically sensitive matters directly to elected representatives or to a Board or senior management body.
- (b) Contributing directly to the development or scrutiny of either public policy or legislation, or significant organisational policy at an organisational-wide level, including research or consultation and preparing recommendations to a decision-maker who you are accountable to.

- (c) Prioritising, planning and organising a very demanding and diverse workload of complex tasks and managing the resources available to ensure compliance with tight deadlines.
- (d) Leading, managing and motivating a team of staff to ensure effective service delivery.
- (e) Taking personal responsibility for the delivery of high-quality results and for the improvement and development of both processes and people.

Shortlisting Criteria

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

- At least 3 years' experience of applying strong analytical and interpretative skills in order to produce well-judged decisions/solutions within deadlines in a complex or politically sensitive environment.

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 depend on business and service need.

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 19 May 2025**.

[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 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 skills and experience that applicants must possess to be able to undertake the role. An eligibility sift will be carried out based on the information contained in the essential criteria section of the application form. In your completed application form you must therefore demonstrate clearly for each essential criterion, how your skills and experience are relevant to the skills and experience required for the post of Clerk. Should shortlisting be required, the panel will apply the shortlisting criterion at this stage. Applicants who pass the eligibility sift (and any shortlisting, if required) will be invited to the assessment stage of the selection process.

Assessment Stage

As part of this stage of the selection process, applicants will be required to attend an assessment centre and complete a written exercise and a committee simulation exercise. Applicants who pass these exercises will be invited to attend an interview.

The assessment centre is planned for week commencing: 9 June 2025

Interview Stage

The interview will address the information contained in the Job Specification and will assess the Essential Criteria and Assembly Skills and Behaviours; and will include the preparation and delivery of a presentation to the selection panel.

Interviews are planned for week commencing: 23 June 2025

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

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 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. Assembly Clerks contribute 7.35% of salary and the Assembly Commission contributes a further 34.25% 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.

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 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 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 normally 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 028 9052 1741 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.