



Northern Ireland
Assembly



Deputy Editor of Debates

£54,090 - £55,680

Candidate Information Booklet

Completed Application Forms must be submitted no later
than 12 noon (UK time) on Friday 05 December 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 Deputy Editor of Debates, AG5 in the Northern Ireland Assembly (the Assembly).

The Assembly operates in a dynamic political and parliamentary environment, and as a newly appointed Deputy Editor of Debates, 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. This is an exciting opportunity to join a high-profile organisation with a dedicated and inclusive team.

In turn, we offer a competitive salary and an excellent pension provision where you contribute 5.65% 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 patrick.marsh@niassembly.gov.uk or telephone 02890 521457.



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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About the Role

The Office of the Official Report (Hansard) is responsible for the Official Reports of plenary sittings of the Assembly and certain Committee meetings, as well as a range of other reporting and editorial services. Hansard is also home to the Language Services Unit.

Deputy Editors oversee and manage the production and publication of the Official Reports of meetings of the Assembly and its Committees, and bound volumes of the Official Report; oversee the administration of the Office of the Official Report; oversee staff development; and deputise for the Editor of Debates as and when required. These duties are carried out in an unvaryingly high-pressure and deadline-driven environment in which rapid resolutions to editorial, staffing and technical issues are required daily.

On days when the Assembly sits, the Official Report is published on the Assembly website on a rolling basis. Generally, the complete report of each day's sitting will be available around three hours after the business is finished. The scheduling and timing of Assembly business can mean working, without notice, unsocial hours and being unable to take leave other than during recess periods, which are themselves subject to change.

Applicants should have a good general knowledge of political and parliamentary affairs, with particular reference to Northern Ireland, and an advanced understanding of the use of the English language in the political/parliamentary context. They should also be able to demonstrate that they have a high level of motivation and drive, with a readiness to assume responsibility and take rapid decisions on editorial matters.

The Person

As Deputy Editor of Debates, you will communicate clearly and confidently, making strategic decisions under pressure, to manage the parliamentary reporting and editing team. You will effectively represent the Office of the Official Report within the Assembly and on an interparliamentary basis by contributing to

cross-departmental initiatives and promoting collaborative working practices.

Core Responsibilities

The main duties and responsibilities of the role require the Deputy Editors to:

Editorial

- Ensure that the Official Reports, including bound volumes and Committee reports, are an accurate record of what was said, by confirming the correct application of Hansard editorial policies and guidance on the reporting of procedure and different types of Assembly business before taking the final decision to publish plenary and/or Committee reports.
- Ensure that material is produced and published within predetermined timescales by setting and monitoring clear deadlines for the completion of work at other stages of the publication process and deploying staffing and other resources to minimise opportunities for delay or disruption.
- Deal with queries from Assembly Members, departmental staff and other customers about Hansard content and make decisions relating to suggested changes to the Official Report.
- Provide advice, as required and at pace, to the Editor, the Speaker of the Assembly or other senior colleagues on the detail of spoken exchanges in plenary or Committee business.
- Regularly review and develop the Hansard reporting and procedure guides as well as the in-house glossary.
- Provide miscellaneous editorial and management services as required by the Editor.

Management

- Lead and manage a large team of staff in a way that optimises their performance to meet the needs of the business.

- Manage and develop the Hansard bespoke training and development programme.
- Deputise for the Editor as and when appropriate.
- Contribute to the overall management of the Office of the Official Report, including estimating, managing and monitoring expenditure, accommodation and equipment; business planning; risk management; and contributing to corporate management policies, strategies and practices as and when required.
- Setting and monitoring editorial standards and keeping abreast of editorial and administration practice in other Parliaments and Assemblies.
- Exploring and identifying how automation and artificial intelligence tools can support staff in the production of the Official Report.
- Undertake and manage procurement exercises to secure the necessary services for the office.

Corporate

- Represent Hansard in the planning and delivery of corporate and directorate projects to fulfil objectives set in the Assembly's corporate strategy.
- Develop and maintain good working relationships with Members, party staff, civil servants and Assembly colleagues.
- Comply with all the Assembly Commission's staff policies and procedures including for Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work.
- Carry out other duties that the Assembly Commission reasonably requires.

Essential Criteria

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

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

(a) editing parliamentary, or similar, substantially verbatim reports to the highest standards of accuracy and to extremely tight deadlines while demonstrating impartiality, integrity and political sensitivity.

(b) planning, prioritising and organising a demanding and diverse workload of complex tasks and the resources available to ensure compliance with tight deadlines;

(c) leading a team to ensure effective service delivery;

(d) strong collaborative skills, including experience working with teams in other business areas and with counterparts in other parliamentary, or similar, organisations.

Shortlisting Criteria

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

One year's experience of developing and maintaining effective and impartial working relationships with elected representatives or senior management that support the delivery of objectives.

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.

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 Friday 05 December 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 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 the essential criteria for the post.

Shortlisting

The Selection Panel reserves the right to use shortlisting as part of the selection process for the post. Should shortlisting be used, the shortlisting criterion listed above will be applied. The Selection Panel reserves the right to set a minimum standard for the shortlisting criterion and/or to invite only those applicants 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.

Job-related assessment

Candidates who meet the essential criteria, and shortlisting criteria if utilised, will be invited to attend an in-person written assessment held in Parliament Buildings. Those applicants who meet the minimum standard in the test will be invited to the next stage of the selection process.

Assessments are planned for: 06 & 07 January 2025

Interview Stage

Applicants who meet the minimum standard in the test will be invited to interview

and will be assessed using the essential criteria and Assembly skills and behaviours outlined above.

Part of the interview process will be the delivery of a presentation which will test parliamentary and political understanding. Further detail on the subject of the presentation will be advised to the applicant on the day of the interview, and the applicant will be expected to present information to the selection panel.

Interviews are planned for week commencing: 26 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 well-being 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 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 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 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.