



Northern Ireland
Assembly



Head of Security/Usher Services

£69,032 - £71,083 (Assembly Grade 4)

Candidate Information Booklet

Completed Application Forms must be submitted no later
than **5pm (UK time) on 29 May 2026**

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

Foreword

Thank you for your interest in the position of Head of Security/Usher Services in the Northern Ireland Assembly (the Assembly).

Working at the Assembly offers a unique and rewarding career in a dynamic political and parliamentary environment at the heart of Northern Ireland's democratic system. As a newly appointed Head of Security/Usher Services, 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 a member of the Assembly Leadership Team.

The Head of Security/Usher Services is a key leadership role, responsible for the physical and personnel security and the provision of a safe and secure environment for Members of the Legislative Assembly (Members), staff and the general public. This is an exciting opportunity to join a high-profile organisation and lead a dedicated security and usher services team in line with the Assembly Commission's values.

In turn, we offer a competitive salary and an excellent pension provision where you contribute 7.55% 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 would like to find out more about the post before making an application please contact Ken Eccles at ken.eccles@niassembly.gov.uk or telephone 02890 521945.



Lesley Hogg, Clerk/Chief Executive Northern Ireland Assembly

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 work of the Executive and representing constituents. It is the prime source of authority in respect of all devolved responsibilities.

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. 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 400 staff and an annual budget of approximately £70m. [Our organisational structure is illustrated on the Northern Ireland Assembly Recruitment website.](#)

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About the Role

The Head of Security/Usher Services is a member of the Assembly Leadership Team and the Corporate Services Directorate Management Team, which provides the facilities, infrastructure and services required to support parliamentary business and to maintain a physically and procedurally safe, secure, modern and efficient environment for Members, staff, visitors and users of Parliament Buildings.

Security/Usher Services is responsible for physical and personnel security at Parliament Buildings and provides frontline operational support to the Assembly's work, including Plenary, Committees, VIP visits and other parliamentary and corporate events. The Service plays a key role in access control, operational readiness and the delivery of a professional, welcoming experience for Members, staff, visitors and building users.

The Head of Security/Usher Services is the senior operational lead for the day-to-day delivery of these services and the principal adviser on physical security for Parliament Buildings and personnel security for Members and staff. The postholder provides strategic leadership across security operations, risk assessment and mitigation, and the management of incidents, emergencies and evacuations, alongside the development, testing and continual improvement of business continuity and major incident management arrangements.

The postholder also has strategic responsibility for the oversight and delivery of related technical and infrastructure projects and associated budgets and contracts, ensuring robust governance, value for money and effective use of resources.

Working in close partnership with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), emergency services and other key agencies, the postholder uses excellent communication, analytical thinking and problem-solving skills to build trusted relationships and provide clear, balanced and authoritative advice to SMT and the Assembly Commission.

In addition, the postholder will shape and deliver the Assembly's protective

security approach for Parliament Buildings, ensuring that security operations and usher/front-of-house services are integrated, proportionate and aligned to the risk and current threat profile.

The postholder will lead and manage the Security/Usher Services teams, which consists of approximately 70 staff, setting clear direction and standards and ensuring staff are trained, competent and supported. Teams provide access control (pedestrian and vehicular), frontline security coverage and support to Plenary, Committees, VIP visits and other events, working closely with internal colleagues and external partners to maintain operational readiness.

Given the operational nature of the role, on-site working is essential. The postholder will participate in an on-call rota and must be available to provide senior operational leadership and decision-making outside normal business hours, including evenings, weekends and public and privilege holidays, as required.

The Person

As Head of Security/Usher Services you will be a visible, values-led leader who sets clear direction, role-models high standards and supports colleagues to perform at their best in a demanding, public-facing environment.

You will bring strong professional credibility in security operations, sound judgement and the ability to stay calm and decisive when responding to incidents or fast-moving situations.

You will be committed to delivering excellent customer service, communicating clearly and respectfully with Members, staff, visitors, contractors and external agencies, while maintaining appropriate confidentiality, discretion and impartiality.

You will carry out your role in accordance with the Assembly Commission's Corporate Values of Excellence, Positivity, Integrity and Collaboration.

You will demonstrate Excellence by delivering consistently high-quality security

and front-of-house services that reflect the values of the Assembly Commission. You will lead with Positivity by being adaptable, approachable and solutions-focused, particularly when pressures or priorities change. Acting with Integrity, you will uphold impartiality, discretion and fairness, ensuring trust and confidence in the Service. Through Collaboration, you will build strong partnerships across the organisation and with external agencies, developing others and fostering an inclusive, cohesive team culture.

Core Responsibilities

The main duties and responsibilities are as follows:

Leadership

- Lead and manage the Security/Usher Services team to provide a safe, secure and welcoming environment for Members, staff, visitors and users of Parliament Buildings, balancing effective security with a positive stakeholder experience.
- Ensure resources are deployed effectively to meet parliamentary business requirements and wider organisational demand, including oversight of and participation in an on-call rota outside normal business hours.
- Ensure staff are trained, competent and supported, including oversight of performance management, wellbeing and professional development within Security/Usher Services.

Overseeing Security Operations

- Oversee the management, operation and continuous improvement of the Assembly's security systems and controls (including access control, CCTV, intruder alarms and associated procedures), ensuring that technology, processes and staffing arrangements work together effectively.
- Lead and manage personnel security matters within Security/Usher Services, including the development and application of relevant policies and procedures.

- Provide timely, impartial and proportionate security advice to the Assembly Commission, SMT, staff, Members and other building users, including acting as a senior point of contact for security matters outside normal business hours.

Risk Assessment and Mitigation

- Develop, implement and review security policies, operational procedures and guidance for Security/Usher Services, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, standards and best practice.
- Lead the identification, assessment and management of physical security risks for Parliament Buildings (including threat and vulnerability assessments and proportionate mitigation plans) and ensure that controls are kept under review as risks evolve. This includes horizon scanning and ensuring protective security measures are reviewed and updated in response to emerging threats (for example, protests, VIP visits and heightened public order risk).

Crisis Management and Emergency Response

- Lead the development, maintenance and testing of the Assembly Commission's Major Incident and Business Continuity policies and processes, ensuring readiness for a range of operational scenarios across the Assembly Commission (including achieving ISO accreditation).
- Lead operational responses to security incidents and emergencies within Parliament Buildings and its immediate environs, including acting as the lead manager for evacuations and coordinating with PSNI, emergency services and internal incident management arrangements.

Coordination and Liaison

- Represent the Assembly Commission and act as the main point of contact for PSNI and external agencies on matters of physical and personnel security and operational delivery at Parliament Buildings.

- Participate in specialist external networks and inter-parliamentary groups relevant to security and parliamentary operations, to benchmark best practice and drive continuous improvement.

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- Lead and manage security and service improvement projects, including technical and infrastructure projects.
- Establish and use performance information (for example, incident trends, compliance checks and service feedback) to monitor effectiveness, identify improvement opportunities and report progress to senior stakeholders.

Governance, Finance and Reporting

- Manage Security/Usher Services budgets (resource and capital) and security-related contracts, ensuring effective financial control, value for money and strong supplier/contract management.
- Prepare high-quality papers, briefings and reports for SMT and the Assembly Commission, and represent the Assembly Commission at meetings as required.
- Act as an Information Assurance Officer (IAO) for Security/Usher Services and ensure information and records are managed in accordance with policy and statutory requirements.
- Comply with all Assembly Commission staff policies and procedures, including Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work policies, and all mandatory training requirements.

Carry out any other duties that the Assembly Commission reasonably requires.

Essential Criteria

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

1. A degree in any subject, and at least 3 years' experience in each of the areas detailed in a) to e).

OR

2. At least 5 years' experience in each of the areas detailed in a) to e).

(a) Strategic responsibility for security operations, including advising at a senior level on personnel and physical incident risk, readiness and response, and leadership in the development, application and continuous improvement of security policies and procedures.

(b) Strategic leadership of a large and/or multi-disciplinary operational team* in a public-facing environment, setting direction, performance expectations and culture to ensure the delivery of high-quality services.

(c) Strategic responsibility for the oversight and delivery of technical and infrastructure projects, including associated financial and contractual management, ensuring robust financial governance, value for money and effective use of resources.

(d) Applying strong analytical thinking and problem-solving skills to interpret complex situations or information and exercise strategic judgement, producing clear, balanced and authoritative written advice for submission to, and/or presentation at, senior leadership or board-level forums.

(e) Strategic engagement with internal business areas and external agencies or partners, using excellent communication skills to build and sustain trusted relationships that support effective security, operational readiness and organisational resilience.

**Large and/or multi-disciplinary operational team is defined as responsibility for 20 or more people across several distinct security disciplines, including physical security operations, personnel security, incident and emergency management, business continuity, and security*

governance, rather than a single operational activity.

Shortlisting Criteria

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

- Experience of leading at a senior strategic level responses to major incidents or operational disruptions (for example, security incidents, protests or high profile events, working collaboratively with internal leaders and external agencies).

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.

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. Access to a form of transport is necessary as travel to Members' Constituency Offices located throughout Northern Ireland will be required from time to time.

Due to the operational nature of the role, there will be no opportunity for hybrid working.

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 **5pm (UK time) on 29 May 2026**.

[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

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 above 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

A written assessment will be used to assess the ability to analyse information, identify key issues and risks, and produce clear, well-structured written advice within a set time. Further details (including format, timing and any preparation required) will be provided to applicants who successfully pass the sift stage.

Only those applicants who meet the minimum standard at assessment will be invited to interview.

Written assessments are planned for **11 and 12 June 2026**.

Interview Stage

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

Part of the interview process will be the delivery of a presentation. The subject of the presentation will be advised to the applicant in advance of the interview and the applicant will be expected to present information to the selection panel.

Interviews are planned for **25 and 26 June 2026**.

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.

Where a Shortlisting Criteria is included, applicants applying under GIS will not be required to complete this section of the application form.

Where a job related assessment or test forms part of the selection process, all applicants must complete and meet the minimum standard required for that assessment or test, including those applying under GIS.

If you require adjustments to assist 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 from a general practitioner or an appropriate specialist when requested by the Human Resources Office.** If you do not have written confirmation available at the time of submitting your application, please arrange to obtain it at the earliest opportunity so that you can provide it promptly when requested to do so.

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 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.

[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 checks which will include security vetting to SC level. All successful candidates are required to pass these checks before an offer can be confirmed. To enable meaningful checks to be carried out, you will need to have lived in the UK for a sufficient period of time. To undergo a SC clearance, you must have normally resided in the UK for a minimum of 3 years out of the last 5 years.

The successful candidate will also be required to satisfactorily complete a six-month probationary period.

The standard working week is 37 hours, (excluding meal breaks). The successful candidate must be available and willing to work flexibly to meet the operational needs of the Assembly, including participating in an on-call rota and working evenings, weekends and public/privilege holidays when required.

The taking of annual leave may be influenced by the parliamentary timetable.

You must also be willing to undertake and successfully complete appropriate training which will be delivered by Assembly staff shortly following appointment. Refresher training will be provided as appropriate.

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.