



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Recruitment and Selection Framework



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Introduction

The Recruitment and Selection Framework is being introduced to attract people of talent and experience from diverse backgrounds.

The Assembly Commission's Recruitment and Selection Framework sets out a variety of selection options to meet recruitment needs. Assessing against different criteria, using different methods, tailored to specific posts gives the best possible opportunity of finding the right person for the role, improving organisational performance and increasing diversity and inclusion.

This approach builds on an individual's natural strengths and talents, giving applicants greater opportunity to demonstrate their suitability for a specific role. It also enables recruiting managers to tailor criteria and selection methods to vacancies, maximising their ability to match the right person to each role. The diagram below provides a summary of each element 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. It refers to general mental ability, cognitive ability or aptitude (the innate potential to perform a particular intellectual function or develop a specific set of skills).
- **Technical** – the demonstration of specific professional skills, knowledge or qualifications.
- **Assembly Commission Leadership Strengths** – the knowledge, skills, behaviours and mindsets that are important for success in the job.
- **Talents** – the things we do regularly, do well and that motivate us.

Not all elements are relevant to every role, so the makeup of the Recruitment and Selection Framework should be different for different types of job to improve the opportunity of getting the right person for the role.

Your experience will be assessed alongside other elements of the Recruitment and Selection Framework to get a more rounded picture of your suitability for the role. The Information for Applicants booklet will outline the elements required for the role and the selection method(s) that will be used.

We encourage the recruitment of people with disabilities. We will consider reasonable adjustments during all stages of the recruitment and selection process. If you require any reasonable adjustments to the recruitment and selection process, please let the Human Resources Office know. Examples of adjustments include providing documents in large print or braille or allowing more time for a test or interview.

Experience

Why we assess experience

When looking at your experience, we are looking for examples of things you have previously achieved or your knowledge in a particular field which is relevant to the job role.

We are not looking at how much time you have served in a particular field, but rather how you performed. Sometimes experience can be transferable from a non-work context. Skills gained through voluntary work or a hobby, such as teamwork or communication, can demonstrate the experience required for the role. We will be looking at your experience, career history and achievements that are relevant to the specific job role.

Ability

Why we assess ability

When testing your ability we want to understand your aptitude for a particular type of work.

We assess ability to help predict future performance. This can help selection panel members to get a real understanding of whether you have the skills required for the role and assess your suitability for the role.

Ability can be assessed using psychometric tests, often in an online internet-based format.

Tests will not be the only form of selection. If you achieve the required standard, you will receive information about the next step in the recruitment process.

Technical

Why we assess technical skills

Some roles are specialised and you may be asked to show that you have specific skills, knowledge or qualifications to be successful, for example a job in the Finance Office, which may require applicants to have accountancy qualifications. If there is a requirement for a particular qualification or membership of a professional body, you may be asked to provide evidence of your qualification(s) or membership.

Talents

Why we assess Talents

Talents are the things we do regularly, do well and that motivate us. The Talents Dictionary defines Talents and is available in [Appendix One](#). Talents will not be listed in the Information for Applicants booklet.

Leadership Strengths

Why we assess Leadership Strengths

The Leadership Strengths are the key strengths required for effective leadership in the Assembly Commission. There are eight Leadership Strengths, with communication and trust integrated throughout. The Leadership Strengths apply to all roles and all grades within the organisation. The selection panel will select the Leadership Strengths which they wish to assess during the recruitment process. The Leadership Strengths will be included in the Candidate Information Booklet and can be assessed in a variety of ways including the application form, job related skills test, presentation, written exercises and interview.

The Leadership Strengths Matrix separates our leadership layers into the following:

- **Self-Leader** – everyone in the organisation. This includes all staff, regardless of grade, who are responsible for managing their own performance, behaviour and development.
- **Leader** – all grades who have responsibility for leading others, either by managing a team or by leading a project or programme of work.
- **Senior Leader** – Assembly Grade 4 and above, who provide senior-level leadership, strategic direction and organisational oversight.

The Leadership Framework is available and the Leadership Strengths Matrix is available. Both documents provide additional detail on the Leadership Strengths.

How we assess the Recruitment and Selection Framework elements

Framework Element	Sift: Application Form	Sift: Psychometric Tests – Verbal and numerical	Sift: Psychometric Tests – Situational Judgement	Assessment: Assessment Centre	Assessment: Presentation	Assessment: In-tray Exercises	Assessment: Written / Oral Analysis Exercise	Assessment: Psychometric Test - Situational Judgement Test	Assessment: Interview
Technical	Assessed	Not assessed	Not Assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Not Assessed	Assessed
Ability	Not assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Not Assessed
Leadership Strengths	Assessed	Not assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Assessed
Talents	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not assessed	Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Assessed
Experience	Assessed	Not assessed	Not assessed	Assessed	Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Assessed

Human Resources Office – Staff Handbook Policy Change Control Record

Policy title: Recruitment and Selection Framework

Staff Handbook Section: 1

Current version/date	Policy Change (relevant paragraph(s) and reason for change)	Approval mechanism (SMT / Head of HR)	Effective date of approval / change
14/09/2024	I've moved the content of Appendix Two Assembly Skills and Behaviours out of tables and removed the shaded coloured background on text as this reduces colour contrast and makes it more difficult for people to read. Tables without a proper structure are difficult for screen readers to use.	Change made by Web Content Manager	09/08/2024
03/07/2026	Revision to wording in relation to (i) replacement of Assembly Skills and Behaviours with the Leadership Strengths; and (ii) change 'Strengths' to 'Talents'	Head of HR	03/07/2026

Appendix One - Talents Dictionary

Talents	Definition
Adaptable	You can adapt to variations in work or environment and your effectiveness is not impacted by change. You are flexible and versatile and act as an advocate for change.
Analytical	You seek and analyse information to inform decisions based on the best available evidence.
Authentic	You are self-aware and true to yourself in all situations, even when under pressure.
Catalyst	You are self-motivated to act to achieve a goal. You are confident using your own initiative to take forward actions.
Challenger	You can bring a fresh perspective whatever the situation or context. You see other people's views and can appreciate there are many different angles to consider.
Change Agent	You are positive and inspirational in leading and supporting others through change.
Confident	You take charge of situations, people and decisions. You communicate confidently and give direction.
Courageous	You are an innovator who tries new approaches and pushes yourself to work outside your comfort zone.

Talents	Definition
Decisive	You use your judgement and take a considered approach to situations and tasks when making decisions.
Disciplined	You follow processes, operating firmly within set standards, rules and guidelines.
Efficient	You convert resources into results in the most efficient and economical way.
Emotionally Intelligent	You draw insight from your own emotions and those of others to demonstrate empathy.
Enabler	You see the potential in everybody and encourage them to learn, progress and develop.
Explainer	You communicate thoughts and ideas, verbally or in writing. You simplify complexities and adapt communication so others can understand.
Focused	You strive for quality outcomes and excellence in everything you do.
Inclusive	You recognise everyone as an individual, accepting people for who they are and treating everyone fairly. You actively encourage and provide opportunities for others to share ideas and contributions.
Influencer	You influence others. You articulate the rationale to gain their agreement.

Talents	Definition
Improver	You look for better ways of doing things and enjoy coming up with new and original ideas.
Learner	You are inquisitive, you seek out new information and look for new ways to develop yourself.
Mediator	You are inquisitive, you seek out new information and look for new ways to develop yourself.
Mission	You provide stability and cohesion within teams, finding common ground and purpose. You enjoy collaborating with others to drive forward a shared goal.
Motivator	You are highly driven and inspire others to move things along and make things happen.
Negotiator	You facilitate constructive discussions and enjoy getting all parties to reach an agreement.
Networker	You proactively create and maintain positive, professional and trusting working relationships with a wide range of people within and outside the organisation. You identify connections and reach

Talents	Definition
	out to bring people together.
Organiser	You make plans and are well prepared. You seek to maximise time and productivity.
Precise	You are detail-focussed, you ensure everything is accurate and error free.
Preventer	You think ahead to anticipate, identify and address any risks or problems before they occur.
Problem Solver	You take a positive approach to tackling problems and find ways to identify suitable solutions.
Relationship Builder	You quickly establish mutual respect and trust, building long lasting relationships with others.
Resilient	You have inner composure, recover quickly from setbacks and learn from them
Responsible	You take ownership for your decisions and hold yourself accountable for what you have promised to deliver.

Talents	Definition
Service Focussed	You look for ways to serve customers putting their needs at the heart of everything you do.
Strategic	You look at the big picture and consider the wider factors and long term implications of decisions.
Team Leader	You are confident to lead a team and can effectively manage team dynamics to drive forward a shared goal. You take into consideration everyone's individual needs and create a genuine team spirit.
Team Player	You work well as part of a team and strive to ensure the team pulls together and is effective.
Visionary	You create and share a clear vision of the future.