

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

Job Specification – PB/014/08

Clerical Officer (Assembly Grade 9)

SALARY RANGE: £14,890 - £17,099

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Applications must be returned by either:

(a) e-mailing, (if registering on-line), to NIA.jobs@brookstreet.co.uk; or,

(b) posting, if using a hard copy, to Brook Street Employment Agency, Annexe C, Dundonald House, Stormont Estate, BT4 3SF.

ALL applications must arrive not later than 12 noon on Friday 3 October 2008.

1.2 **Candidates are reminded that the application form must be fully completed. CVs or other supplementary material will not be accepted in place of, or in addition to, completed application forms.**

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. In carrying out its role, the Northern Ireland Assembly is supported by a Secretariat, which will ultimately comprise some 430 staff. The management structure of the Assembly Secretariat is illustrated in the attached chart.

2.2 The Assembly Secretariat comprises the Office of the Clerk and Director-General, and four Directorates – Clerking and Reporting, Engagement, Properties, and Resources.

Clerk/Director-General's Office

2.3 The Clerk and Director-General's Office is mainly responsible for supporting the Assembly Commission and Senior Management Board; corporate planning; internal audit; legal services; information/records management; and compliance with statutory equality legislation.

Clerking and Reporting Directorate

2.4 This Directorate meets the Clerking and Reporting needs of the Assembly and is made up of four offices. The **Bill Office** supports the work of the Assembly in its consideration of primary legislation. The

Committee Office is responsible for servicing the needs of the statutory and other committees established by the Assembly. The **Business Office** supports the work of plenary sessions of the Assembly and assists in the processing of subordinate legislation. The **Office of the Official Report** (Hansard) produces the Official Reports of plenary meetings of the Assembly and a number of committee meetings.

Engagement Directorate

- 2.5 The Engagement Directorate focuses on the engagement and outreach role of the Assembly to the wider community and is responsible for the education service; media services; research and library services; public information literature; the Assembly website; VIP visits; and events.

Properties Directorate

- 2.6 The Properties Directorate manages and maintains the accommodation required by Assembly members, staff and the general public. The Directorate is responsible for new builds; building management; accommodation; facilities management; security; and sustainable development.

Resources Directorate

- 2.7 The Resources Directorate brings together a number of administrative 'support' functions including **Personnel** issues i.e. pay and grading, terms and conditions for staff; equal opportunities and recruitment; **Finance** matters i.e. administration of the annual Assembly budget, accounting services; financial services for both members and staff; and **Procurement**; and **Information Systems**.
- 2.8 **Clerical Officers** are employed in all of the above business areas and are responsible for providing administrative support where required.

3. LOCATION

- 3.1 Successful applicants should expect to be based in accommodation in the Stormont area. Currently Assembly Secretariat staff are accommodated in Parliament Buildings and Annexe C, Dundonald House.

4. JOB DESCRIPTION

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- 4.1 Staff at Clerical Officer level in all of the Assembly business areas will normally be part of a team and office administration duties may include :_
- dealing with queries from Members of the Legislative Assembly; the public and colleagues,
 - receiving and making phone calls,
 - filing,
 - photocopying,
 - processing payments,
 - arranging and collating papers for meetings,
 - input of data to IT systems
- 4.2 Clerical Officers could be appointed to any of the offices within the Assembly Directorates outlined above and may be subsequently transferred to other business areas, as required.

5. SELECTION

5.1 Job-Related Skills Test

All applicants will be required to sit a job-related skills test which will focus on the ability to follow written instructions, the ability to carry out basic numerical calculations and the ability to check information for accuracy.

- 5.2 The job-related skills test will be administered prior to any assessment of application forms. Following completion of the test, application forms will be assessed in descending test score order, as required, to create a sufficient pool for interview.

As failure to complete the application form correctly will result in elimination from the competition, irrespective of the score achieved at test, candidates must ensure that they follow all instructions carefully. (See paragraph 6).

5.3 Criteria-based Interview

Final selection of candidates will be based on performance at criteria based interview(s). Applicants must be able to demonstrate, at interview, evidence (from work, school, sport, voluntary work, hobbies etc.) an acceptable level of competence in each of these areas:

Services – delivering services to meet required standards of quality, planning and organising workload to meet standards and deadlines

People – creating, maintaining and enhancing effective working relationships and

Information and Communication – communicating information to meet customer needs in a clear, concise and timely manner and operating and optimising the use of IT systems.

5.4 **Offers of Appointment**

Offers of appointment will be made in order of merit. There are a number of current vacancies at Clerical Officer level within the Secretariat. However this competition will also be used to fill any further vacancies which might arise during the 12 month period immediately following the date of the first appointment.

6. **COMPLETION OF APPLICATION FORMS**

- 6.1 Applicants can register on-line, through the Brook Street Employment Agency web site: www.brookstreet.co.uk/NIA.

Alternatively, a hard copy application form can be obtained by writing to Brook street employment agency, Annexe C, Dundonald House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SF, or by emailing NIA.info@brookstreet.co.uk Applicants applying manually should note that failure to complete the application form correctly will result in elimination from the competition, so they must ensure that they follow all instructions carefully.

- 6.2 **Applicants must use only the application form provided and must not alter the form's layout, include additional pages, or submit additional material in support of their application forms.**

7. **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT**

- 7.1 These appointments are permanent and will be made by the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission. The successful applicants will be employees of that Commission. All appointments are subject to the satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period.
- 7.2 The standard working week is 37 hours, excluding meal breaks (42 hours gross). Working hours will be dictated by the mode of operation of the Assembly and may involve work into late evenings, at weekends and on public holidays.
- 7.3 The salary scale for this post is currently £14,890(minimum) to £17,099 (maximum). Starting salary will be point one on the salary scale. This post currently attracts an additional Assembly allowance of £1,000 per annum.

- 7.4 In addition to the usual public and privilege holidays, there is an annual leave allowance of 25 days. Applicants should be aware that a major influence in determining when leave can be taken will be the Assembly timetable.
- 7.5 New entrants who join the Northern Ireland Assembly are eligible to join the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS (NI)) –NUVOS arrangement. Pension is an important part of the reward package for employees of the Assembly and, on average, the employer pays more than 18% of pay towards pension costs. As well as providing you with an easy and secure way to help you provide for your retirement, the PCSPS (NI) also provides dependants' and ill health benefits.

We offer all new employees the choice of either:

- Nuvos - a high quality, index-linked defined benefit pension scheme that currently has a 3.5% member contribution rate. Your employer also makes contributions; or
- Partnership in a stakeholder type money purchase arrangement with an employer contribution. The employer basic contribution is based on your age, and this is paid regardless of whether you choose to contribute. You do not have to contribute if you do not wish to, but if you do your employer will match your contributions up to an additional 3% of pay. Your employer will also pay a further contribution, of 0.8% of pay, to the PCSPS (NI) to cover you for Death in Service benefits.

If you previously worked for an employer covered by the PCSPS (NI) arrangements, different conditions may apply. If you already have a PCSPS (NI) pension in payment, you should be aware that the pension scheme rules prevent members from receiving more by way of pay and pension combined on re-employment than they were earning as salary before they retired. This is called "abatement". If you want to know more about how this may affect you, please contact Civil Service Pensions at:

Waterside House,
75 Duke Street,
Londonderry,
BT47 6FP;
Tel: 028 7131 9000;
Email: cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk

If you previously worked for an employer covered by the PCSPS (NI) arrangements and left with an early retirement, severance or redundancy package then your existing benefits may be affected if you accept this post. If your service was enhanced (increased) when you left then you will not be able to build up benefits in the defined benefit scheme during the period that is covered by the enhancement included

in your existing benefits. If you opt to join the Partnership arrangement, employer contributions will not be payable for this enhancement period but you will be able to contribute if you wish. If you are receiving a pension or annual compensation payment then this may be reduced during your re-employment. If you received a top-up payment under the early severance temporary arrangements then your pay may be reduced during your re-employment. If you want to know more about this, please contact Civil Service Pensions.

You may be able to transfer a pension with your current or a previous employer into the PCS (NI). Information on Transfers In can be found in the New Entrant Pack which you should receive on taking up employment.

In addition, details on retirement regulations may be obtained from Civil Service Pensions at the address above.

7.6 Successful applicants will be given suitable training, as necessary.

8. APPLICATIONS

8.1 Under fair employment legislation, the Northern Ireland Assembly is required to monitor the community background of those applying to fill vacancies. Intending applicants must, therefore, complete the equal opportunities monitoring form and return it, together with the application form.

8.2 Further information about the Assembly can be obtained on the Internet at website: www.niassembly.gov.uk.

8.3 Potential candidates who wish to learn more about the posts before deciding to apply may telephone 028 9052 4692.

8.4 The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission is committed to equality of opportunity in employment and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified candidates irrespective of gender, marital or family status, religious belief/political opinion, disability, age, race, nationality or sexual orientation. **All applications for employment will be considered on the basis of merit.**

This job specification should not be taken as constituting conditions of employment and should be read in conjunction with the enclosed leaflet "Information for Applicants".

NI ASSEMBLY- ORGANISATION CHART

