

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY
Job Specification
Deputy Head of Finance
(Assembly Grade 5)

SALARY RANGE: £37,219 - £42,161

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Application forms are available on the Northern Ireland Assembly website and should be completed online. Completed application forms, which demonstrate the skills and experience sought, must be submitted by the closing date of Friday 14 November 2014.
- 1.2 **Candidates are reminded that the application form must be fully completed. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. CVs or other supplementary material will not be accepted in place of, or in addition to, completed application forms.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission (the Commission) is a corporate body established by section 40 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. It is required to provide the Assembly, or ensure that the Assembly is provided, with the property, staff and services required for the Assembly's purposes. The Commission employs a Secretariat to serve the Assembly. The Assembly Secretariat comprises of the Chief Executive's Office and five Directorates – Legal and Governance Services, Clerking and Reporting, Corporate Services, Facilities and Information and Outreach. The management structure of the Assembly Secretariat is illustrated in the attached chart.
- 2.2 The Commission's vision is to be at the forefront of providing outstanding and progressive parliamentary services.
- 2.3 The Commission wishes to appoint an Accountant to the role of Deputy Head of Finance. This post will be within the Finance Office, which is part of the Corporate Services Directorate. This Directorate brings together a number of administrative functions mainly in support of **elected** Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), MLA's support staff and Secretariat staff. The Finance Office is responsible for the provision of high-quality financial support services to both MLAs and the Directorates within the Secretariat. It is responsible for a wide range of services including payroll, operation of a travel desk, reporting and administering the annual Assembly budget as well as a full range of accounting and financial advice services to Members on all areas of Financial support other than pensions.
- 2.4 The Finance Office also produces the Commission's Annual Report and Resource Accounts, which are produced under the International

Financial Reporting Standards regime (IFRS), as adapted for the specific needs of the public sector.

3. LOCATION

- 3.1 Secretariat staff are accommodated in Parliament Buildings. However whilst a roof refurbishment project is underway the Finance Office is temporarily relocated to Annexe C, Stormont Estate.

4. JOB DESCRIPTION

Responsibility and Reporting Arrangements

- 4.1 The Deputy Head of Finance will have responsibility for preparing the Interim and Annual Resource Accounts for the Commission, and for supervising the delivery of a full range of financial services to both MLAs and Secretariat staff. The post-holder will report directly to the Head of Finance.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- 4.2 The main duties and responsibilities of the post will include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Full production of the Commission's Interim and Annual Resource Accounts under the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) regime;
 - Supervision of the production and presentation of the Northern Ireland Assembly's Pension Scheme Annual Resource Accounts;
 - Supervision of the monthly accounting procedures, including presentation of management accounts and monthly balance sheet reconciliations;
 - Assisting with the preparation of the in-year DFP monitoring returns and Estimates preparation;
 - Management of all insurance matters for the Commission;
 - Assisting in the procurement of services for the Finance Office and acting as contract manager for any contracts which are awarded as a result;
 - Provision of high quality, reliable, accurate and timely financial information, or technical advice, internally and externally, as required. This will require an up-to-date understanding of the current public sector accounting requirements IFRS regime;
 - Acting as a liaison officer with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) on all matters of tax compliance;
 - Line management of a team, who often have to work to tight deadlines. This will include an operational oversight of the management of the day-to-day work of the Finance Office.
 - Developing IT systems to support financial management and reporting process. This may include project managing the

implementation of a new computerised fixed asset management system;

- The management, development and implementation of any ad-hoc financial exercises or projects within the Finance Office.

5. ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

5.1 At the closing date for applications, applicants must have:

- (i) successfully completed the professional examinations and be a full, current member of one of the Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies listed below:
 - a) the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants;
 - b) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland;
 - c) the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland;
 - d) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales;
 - e) the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants;
 - f) the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

Membership of alternative accounting bodies, recognised as equivalent by the selection panel, will be considered.

AND

- (ii) At least two years' post qualification* direct experience of preparing annual resource and/or accrual accounts for a public, commercial or voluntary sector organisation on an IFRS basis;

AND

- (iii) At least two years' post qualification* experience of preparing, managing and monitoring budgets and reporting on the allocation of resources for a public, commercial or voluntary sector organisation;

AND

- (iv) Experience of maintaining and developing core IT based financial and/or management accounting systems to assist in the production of financial reports.

* "Post qualification" experience will be deemed to have commenced from the date on which applicants are admitted to full membership of one of the professional bodies referred to at 5.1 (i) above, having fully satisfied all the criteria for membership.

6. SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

6.1 The Assembly Commission reserves the right to use shortlisting as part of the recruitment process for this post. Should shortlisting be required, the following shortlisting criteria will be applied:

- (i) Direct experience of preparing public sector resource accounts.

7. CORE COMPETENCES

In addition to the essential criteria outlined above, the following competences will be tested at interview:

Services

Maintain service delivery, monitor customer satisfaction and initiate, plan and implement change and improvement in services and systems to meet customer needs.

People

The ability to develop teams and individuals to encourage innovation, improve performance and meet business objectives; plan, allocate, monitor and evaluate work carried out by teams, individuals and self; create, maintain and enhance effective working relationships; assess own development needs and develop self to improve job performance and fulfil future potential and to select personnel.

Information and Communication

The ability to seek, organise, evaluate and communicate information in order to meet customer needs; analyse information to solve problems and make decisions; communicate message/information to others in order to influence them and gain their commitment.

Programme and Project Management

The ability to contribute to the development and progression of business cases for programmes and projects within the organisation; to support the management of projects and evaluate the success of a project.

8. Further Information

- 8.1 If you require more information on the recruitment process please contact the Human Resources Office on (028) 90378357.
- 8.2 Further information about the NI Assembly can be obtained on the Internet at website: www.niassembly.gov.uk.

9. INTERVIEW

Criteria-based Interview

- 9.1 Final selection of candidates will be based on performance at criteria-based interview(s) structured around the qualities, skills and experience sought in the essential criteria section of the job specification as well as the core competences listed above. All candidates will be expected to display an acceptable level of competence in each of these areas. Offers of appointment will be made in order of merit.

10. COMPLETION OF APPLICATION FORMS

- 10.1 **The selection panel may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information available, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability. It is therefore essential that applicants describe fully in the application form the extent to which they satisfy the above criteria. It is not appropriate simply to list the various posts that the applicants have held. The selection panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicants' posts about the skills and experience gained.**
- 10.2 **Only the information presented in the relevant box of the application form will be considered by the panel when assessing that criterion. Applicants should be aware that the panel will not have access to the employment history section of the application form when they are considering if an applicant meets the essential or shortlisting criteria for the role.**
- 10.3 **It will be the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate clearly on their application forms how they satisfy the essential and shortlisting criteria. Applicants must use only the application forms provided and must not submit additional material in support of their application forms.**

11. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT

- 11.1 This appointment is permanent and will be made by the Assembly Commission. The successful applicant will be an employee of the Commission. The appointment is subject to the satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period.
- 11.2 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 NI Assembly and may involve work into late evenings, at weekends and on public holidays.
- 11.3 The salary scale for this post is £37,219 to £42,161 and the starting salary will be £37,219 per annum.
- 11.4 In addition to the usual public and privilege holidays, there is an annual leave allowance of 25 days, increasing to 26 days after 4 years of service and to 30 days after 5 years of service. Applicants should be

aware that a major influence in determining when leave can be taken will be the parliamentary timetable.

- 11.5 Subject to eligibility, a childcare allowance scheme is available.
- 11.6 Successful applicants will be given suitable training, including formal specialised courses as necessary.

12 PENSIONS

- 12.1 The Assembly Commission offers all new employees an attractive pension package. Further details can be found on the Principal Civil Service Pensions Scheme (Northern Ireland) website at:

<http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni/index/new-members.htm>

If you are unable to access the website or require the information in another format please contact:

The Pensions Manager
Human Resources Office
Annexe C
Dundonald House
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BT4 3XX
Tel: 028 9037 8313

- 12.2 Please note that the NI Assembly does not use HR Connect.

13. APPLICATIONS

- 13.1 Under fair employment legislation, the Commission is required to monitor the community background of those applying to fill vacancies. Applicants must, therefore, complete the equal opportunities monitoring section of the application form.
- 13.2 The 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 "Guidance for Applicants".