##### 

##### NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

#### Job Specification

# **Parliamentary Reporter**

**(Assembly Grade 7)**

## SALARY RANGE: £25,114 to £27,907

1. **INTRODUCTION**
   1. Application forms are available on the Northern Ireland Assembly website and must be completed online. Completed application forms, which demonstrate the skills and experience sought, must be submitted by the closing date of **23:59 on 20 November 2016**.
   2. **CVs or other supplementary material will not be accepted in place of, or in addition to, submitted application forms.**

### BACKGROUND

* 1. The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission (the Commission) is a corporate body established by section 40 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Commission must provide the Assembly, or ensure that the Assembly is provided, with the property, staff and services required for its purposes. The Commission employs a Secretariat to serve the Assembly. The management structure of the Secretariat is illustrated in the organisation chart.
  2. Parliamentary Reporters are based in the Office of the Official Report (Hansard) which, amongst other things, produces the Official Reports of all Assembly sittings and the majority of Assembly Committee meetings.

### LOCATION

* 1. The successful candidate(s) will be based in Parliament Buildings, Belfast, but will, on occasion, be expected to work at other locations depending on the mode of operation of the Assembly.

**4. JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Responsibility and Reporting Arrangements**

4.1 Parliamentary Reporters work under the direct supervision of Assistant Editors, who work to the Deputy Editors of Debates and the Editor of Debates.

**Main Duties and Responsibilities**

Parliamentary Reporters will be expected to:

* Attend meetings of the Assembly and its Committees to provide an accurate, chronological, clear log and to observe what is going on; identify each Member who speaks; note in full his or her opening words; note any remarks made off-microphone; and note any references to, for example, proper names, places, technical terms and quotes.
* Using a computer, and based on recorded sound, produce, within an agreed deadline, an accurate and grammatically correct transcript of each five-minute period, conforming to Hansard parliamentary reporting style and faithfully recording House procedure.
* Check spelling and punctuation, correct grammatical errors and, where necessary, reconstruct Member and witness contributions, having regard to the political context of the speech.
* Research using relevant sources, specific references to proper names, place names and technical terminology, as well as historical, geographical and literary references, foreign words and phrases, and so forth.
* Provide services including editing, logging, transcribing, proof-reading, indexing etc for other miscellaneous items of business, as required by Assistant Editors, Deputy Editors and the Editor.
* Attend meetings with the Editor, Deputy Editors and Assistant Editors and represent the Office of the Official Report (Hansard) and/or Assembly at events, meetings etc as required.
* Become familiar with the Hansard parliamentary reporting and procedure guides, the Hansard glossary and other relevant guidance on grammar, syntax and spelling.
* Keep abreast of current, political and parliamentary affairs, particularly with reference to Northern Ireland.
* Undertake such other duties appropriate to the level of the position.

**5. ESSENTIAL CRITERIA**

* 1. Applicants for the post must possess, by the closing date for applications:

1. GCSE/GCE ‘O’ level passes at grades A to C in four subjects, other than English language, **plus** a GCSE/GCE ‘O’ level pass at grade A or better in English language. Applications will be considered from candidates with relevant, formal qualifications of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated.

**AND**

at least two years’ cumulative, but not necessarily concurrent, experience in the preparation of written material in a presentational format.

**AND**

a) A good knowledge and understanding of political and parliamentary affairs, with particular relevance to Northern Ireland.

**AND**

b) The ability to interpret, research and communicate complicated verbal and written information, arguments, reports etc.

**OR**

ii. At least three years’ cumulative, but not necessarily concurrent, experience in the preparation of written material in a presentational format.

**AND**

a) A good knowledge and understanding of political and parliamentary affairs, with particular relevance to Northern Ireland.

**AND**

b) The ability to interpret, research and communicate complicated verbal and written information, arguments, reports etc.

Relevant or equivalent qualifications: state the type of qualification and date awarded (the date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body). If you believe your qualification is equivalent, or higher, to the one required, the onus is on you to provide full and appropriate details of the qualification and why you believe it to be of an equivalent or higher standard.

**6. CORE COMPETENCES**

6.1 In addition to satisfying the eligibility criteria at 5.1 above, the following core competences apply to this post. Full details of the core competences, relevant to the post, can be found at [www.niassembly.gov.uk/jobs](http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/jobs).

**Services**

Deliver and maintain services; contribute to the planning and implementation of changes in services, operations and systems to meet customer needs.

**People**

Contribute to the development of teams and individuals to encourage innovation and improve performance; plan, allocate, monitor and evaluate work carried out by teams, individuals and self; create, maintain and enhance effective working relationships.

**Information and Communication**

Seek, evaluate and communicate information in a clear, concise, relevant and timely manner to meet customer needs; analyse and exchange information to solve problems, make decisions, influence and gain the commitment of others.

1. **STAGES OF THE SELECTION PROCESS**
   1. **Job-related Skills Test – First Stage**

Job-related skills tests, which will cover comprehension and the use and knowledge of English, will be held prior to any assessment of application forms. The results from the tests will be used to decide which applicants will proceed to the eligibility sift. Therefore, invitation to test does not imply that an applicant possesses the essential criteria. The tests may be held online and instructions and further information will be issued to applicants after the closing date for applications. Only those applicants who meet the minimum standard, and who score highest in the tests, will be considered for the next stage of the selection process.

* 1. **Eligibility Sift**

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.

* 1. **Job-related Skills Test – Second Stage**

A thorough job-related assessment, which will include tests covering editorial skills, will be used to assess the competency of applicants against the essential criteria. Following the eligibility sift, invitations to complete the assessment will be issued to only those applicants who have been deemed as having met the essential criteria. Only those applicants who meet the minimum standard, and who score highest in this second-stage, will be invited to interview. Please note, the second-stage assessment may be carried out online or at a test centre, and it is anticipated that the assessment may be held during January 2017.

* 1. **Criteria-based Interview**

A selection panel will interview applicants who have met the required standard and scored highest at the second stage of the job-related skills test. The interview will address the essential criteria and competencies listed in sections 5 and 6 above.

1. **FURTHER INFORMATION**
   1. There are currently three Parliamentary Reporter vacancies. Offers of appointment will be made in order of merit based on performance at the criteria-based interview(s).
   2. If you require more information on the recruitment process, please contact the Human Resources Office on 90521699.
   3. Further information about the NI Assembly can be obtained on the Internet at website: [www.niassembly.gov.uk](http://www.niassembly.gov.uk).
2. **COMPLETION OF APPLICATION FORMS**
   1. It will be the responsibility of applicants to demonstrate clearly in their application form how they satisfy the essential criteria.
3. **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT**
   1. These appointments are permanent and will be made by the Commission. The successful candidate(s) will be employees of the Commission. All appointments are subject to the satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period.
   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, during sitting days, will involve work late into the evening and, may involve work at weekends and on public holidays.
   3. The salary scale for this post is £25,114 to £27,907. The starting salary for the successful candidate(s) will be £25,114 per annum.
   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. In practice, this means that Parliamentary Reporters may generally take leave only when the Assembly is in recess.
   5. Subject to eligibility, a childcare voucher scheme is available.
   6. The successful candidate(s) will be given suitable training, including formal specialised courses as necessary.
4. **PENSIONS** 
   1. The Assembly offers all 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

Room 402

Parliament Buildings

Ballymiscaw

Stormont

BT4 3XX

Tel: 028 9052 1685

* 1. Please note that the NI Assembly does not use HR Connect.

1. **APPLICATIONS**
   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.
   2. The Commission is committed to equality of opportunity in employment and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified applicants 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 does not constitute any term or condition of employment.**