Scholarship in Software Development Assembly Grade 8

Remuneration for the 10 week and 51-week placement is based on National Living Wage.

With effect from 1 April 2024, this is £11.44 per hour

Candidate Information Booklet

Completed Application Forms must be submitted no later

than 12 noon (UK time) on Friday 12 April 2024

Please retain a copy of this booklet for your reference

throughout the selection process.

About Us

The Assembly is at the heart of political and public life as the democratically elected legislature 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 Executive and representing constituents.

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 of the Assembly. The day-to-day running of the Assembly is delegated to the Clerk/Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team.

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 370 staff and an annual revenue budget of £51m. [Our organisational structure is illustrated on the Northern Ireland Assembly Recruitment website](#).

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About the Role

This Scholarship in Software Development will provide the undergraduate student with the technical skills and work experience to embark on a career as a Software Developer.

The successful applicant will have the opportunity to obtain paid full-time work experience as a Junior Software Developer in tandem with their degree. Subject to successful completion of the placements and degree qualification, the successful applicants will be offered a two-year fixed-term contract as a Software Developer.

During work placement, the Junior Software Developer will join the in-house Software Development Team and will receive formal training and mentoring in a range of technologies including: Agile, C#.Net, ASP.Net Core, MVC architecture and SQL Server.

The structure of the IS Scholarship is as follows:

- 10-week summer placement as a Junior Software Developer between July and September at the end of Stage 1 of your degree

- Loan of high specification laptop during Stage 2 of your degree

- 51-week placement as a Junior Software Developer during your placement year at Stage 3 of your degree

- Loan of a high specification laptop, mentoring and support throughout the final year of your degree at Stage 4

- Two-year fixed-term contract as a Software Developer upon successful completion of work placements and degree qualification.

The IS Scholarship Programme in Software Development aims to provide the undergraduate student with the technical skills and work experience to embark on a career as a Software Developer.

Benefits of an IS Scholarship with the Assembly Commission

- Paid 10-week summer placement.
- Paid 51-week placement.
- During undergraduate placements you will accrue paid leave.
    - You will accrue four days paid leave and up to three public and privilege holidays during the 10-week summer placement.
    - You will accrue 25 days annual leave and 12 public holidays during the 51-week placement.
- Intensive training in MVC, ASP.Net Core, Azure, C#.NET, Azure DevOps, Agile development cycle, SQL Server.
- Mentoring support during your final year.
- Flexible hours.
- Two-year paid, fixed-term contract after completion of degree.
- Opportunity to join pension scheme.
- Free, convenient car parking is available throughout the Stormont Estate as well as easy access to public transport.
- Loan of Assembly high-spec laptop for the duration of the programme.
- Exposure to the whole-system development life cycle.

Scholarship Schedule

Scholarship Structure	Dates	Progress Requirements
Applications open	12 March 2024	
Applications close	12 noon on Friday 12 April 2024	
Interviews at Northern Ireland Assembly, Parliament Buildings, Belfast.	29 & 30 May 2024	By 1st July 2024 must have passed all Stage 1 modules
10-week summer placement as Junior Software Developer	Between July 2024 and September 2024	Must complete training and demonstrate an understanding of ASP.Net Core MVC architecture*
Degree Stage 3 / 51-week placement as Junior Developer	Between June 2025 and September 2026	Must meet the duties and responsibilities of a Junior Developer*.
Degree Stage 4	Final year support	Must pass their degree.
Two-year fixed-term contract as Junior Software Developer	June 2027	Must meet the duties and responsibilities of the Software Developer role. *

*Subject to performance, attendance and conduct requirements of the NI Assembly Commission

Essential Criteria

Applicants for the Scholarship must, at the closing date for applications, be enrolled at Queen's University Belfast at Stage 1 in one of the following degrees:

1. BSc (Hons) Computer Science with Year of Professional Experience

2. BEng (Hons) Software Engineering with Year of Professional Experience

Please note that applicants must have passed all modules at Stage 1 by 1st July 2024

Shortlisting Criteria

If there are a high number of applications, then only those with the highest mark in the following modules will be invited to interview;

CSC1027 Programming, or

CSC1025 Procedural Programming

Assembly Skills & Behaviours

The following Assembly Skills and Behaviours will be assessed during the selection process:

Building relationships and effective communication

...is creating and maintaining positive, professional and respectful internal and external working relationships through effective and appropriate communications.

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 MLA Constituency Offices located throughout Northern Ireland will be required from time to time. The role offers hybrid working whereby staff will have the opportunity to work from home for part of the week.

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 **12 noon (UK time)** on **Friday 12 April 2024.**

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, Technical and Assembly Skills and Behaviours 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 at page 5 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.

Interview Stage

Applicants invited to interview will be assessed using the Essential Criteria and Assembly Skill and Behaviour as outlined above.

Part of the interview process will be a technical exercise and a presentation, the subject of which will be advised to the applicant on the day of the interview. The applicant will be expected to present information from the technical exercise to the selection panel.

If shortlisting has been used, applicants invited to interview will need to produce a certified copy of their module score.

Interviews are planned for week commencing: 29 & 30 May 2024

Further Interview Stage

The selection panel reserves the right to hold a further interview stage if deemed necessary.

Further information on the Recruitment and Selection process is available in the [Recruitment and Selection Framework](#) and [Guidance on Recruitment and Selection for Applicants.](#)

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.

If an assessment or test is used as a shortlisting tool, then applicants applying under GIS will not be required to complete the assessment or test and will be offered a guaranteed interview, provided that they demonstrate in their application form that they meet the essential criteria for the role.

In instances where an assessment or test forms part of the selection process and is not a shortlisting tool, then all applicants must meet the minimum standard required for that assessment or test, including those applying under GIS.

If you wish to submit your application under the GIS, or if you require adjustments to enable 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.](mailto:recruitment@niassembly.gov.uk) **Please note that you will be required to provide written confirmation of your disability or long-term health condition from a general practitioner or an appropriate specialist, by the closing date for applications.**

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 also offer a range of non-salary benefits which include hybrid working; 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.

As an equal opportunities employer, we are happy to talk about the possibility of flexible working in this role with the successful applicant.

[View further details of our employee benefits.](#)

Terms and Conditions of Placements

The standard working week is 37 hours, (excluding meal breaks). Working hours will be dictated by the mode of operation of the Assembly and may involve work into late evenings and on occasions, at weekends and on public holidays.

Remuneration for the 10 week and 51-week placement is based on National Living Wage. With effect from 1 April 2024, this is £11.44 per hour.

Based on the annual and public & privilege leave entitlement offered by the Assembly Commission, the 10 weeks placement will accrue a total allowance of 7 days. For the 51-week placement, there is an annual leave allowance of 25 days as well as 12 public and privilege holidays. Applicants should be aware that a major influence in determining when leave can be taken will be the parliamentary timetable.

The successful applicant will be given suitable training, including formal specialised courses as necessary.

Pensions

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:

www.finance-ni.gov.uk/topics/working-northern-ireland-civil-service/civil-service-pensions-ni

Right to Work and Nationality Requirements

You must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom and satisfy the nationality requirements for appointment.

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 remain "live" for 18 months from the date it is signed and may be used to fill any further opportunities.

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 521689 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.