

**Guide for Applicants**

**Project and Assurance Analyst**

Key dates for applicants:

Closing date: 9:00am, Monday 12 February 2024

Assessment and interviews are expected to take place in the week commencing 4 March 2024

## Contents

Prior to completing the application form we recommend that applicants familiarise themselves with the contents of this guide, which includes:

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## 1. A message from John French, Chief Executive

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for taking the time to read this Guide for Applicants for the job of Project and Assurance Analyst at the Utility Regulator.

This is an exciting time to join us, as we are expanding as an organisation so we can fully support Northern Ireland in meeting the challenges of climate change, the cost-of-living crisis and ensuring the continuity of energy and water supplies. Electricity, gas and water are essential services that support all homes and businesses in Northern Ireland. As an economic regulator, it is our role to enable, incentivise and hold energy and water companies to account for providing the very best levels of service and price for consumers both now and in the future.

We are ambitious about the future of the Utility Regulator. It is essential that we can enthusiastically and professionally support Northern Ireland in its transition to a net-zero carbon economy, whilst ensuring affordable and good quality electricity, gas, and water services for all.

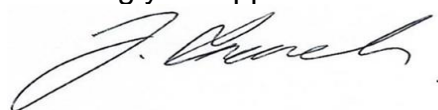
We want the Utility Regulator to be the best possible organisation to work for. We need passionate people who have the skills, potential, and motivation to make a difference to the lives of people in Northern Ireland and its economy. We are looking for people who share these goals and will pursue these with the highest standards of professionalism. For the Utility Regulator to be successful, we will recruit the best candidates from a range of diverse backgrounds. If you strive to provide the highest levels of service for the greater good and your professional values accord with our organisational values, working here will be exactly what you are looking for in the next step in your career path.

We are an employer of choice as we are committed to staff wellbeing, inclusion, and excellence. Over the last three years we have been awarded Best Companies 'Ones to Watch – Good to Work For' status, we have been successful in gaining the Investors in People Silver award, together with the Diversity Mark and Disability Committed accreditations.

The Project and Assurance Analyst will be part of our project management and quality assurance team, supporting the development and deployment of projects and quality assurance programmes, in line with recognised best practice across the Utility Regulator.

This is a permanent, full-time role, although flexible working, including part-time working will be considered.

Thank you for your interest in joining the Utility Regulator. We very much look forward to receiving your application.



**John French, Chief Executive**

## 2. About us, Northern Ireland's Utility Regulator

### Who we are

The Utility Regulator (UR/our/we) is an independent non-ministerial government department. This means that we are accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly and not to another government department. It is an important distinction as it protects our independence in carrying out our regulatory duties. Our purpose is to regulate Northern Ireland's electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries to protect the short and long-term interests of consumers.

### Our mission:

To protect the short- and long-term interests of consumers of electricity, gas, and water.

### Our vision:

To ensure value and sustainability in energy and water.

### Our values:

1. Be a best practice regulator: transparent, consistent, proportionate, accountable, and targeted.
2. Be professional: listening, explaining, and acting with integrity.
3. Be a collaborative, co-operative and learning team.
4. Be motivated and empowered to make a difference.

We are governed by a Board and accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly through financial and annual reporting obligations. We are organised into four directorates, under two Executive Directors:

1. Consumer and Business Protection;
2. Price Controls;
3. Markets; and
4. Networks and Energy Futures.

### Our diversity statement

#### Be UR Self

We recognise and value that everyone is unique and that we all have different minds. We want to use your difference so that we can harness your unique talent. To that end, we are a diverse and inclusive organisation as we put the 'you are' into 'UR'. Our success is based on the diversity and uniqueness that each of us brings and on the willingness of staff to accept and value one another. This approach helps us protect consumers by making a positive difference to all households and businesses in Northern Ireland.

#### Equality welcoming statement

Northern Ireland continues to have an under-representation of women across STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) industries. We are an equal

opportunities and 'Disability Confident' employer. As people with a disability, people from ethnic minority communities and women are currently under-represented in our workforce, we would welcome applications from these groups.

## What we do

Our statutory objectives are to:

- Protect the short and long-term interests of electricity, gas, water and sewerage consumers with regard to price and quality of service;
- Promote a robust and efficient water and sewerage industry, where appropriate, to deliver high quality services;
- Promote competition, where appropriate, in the generation, transmission and supply of electricity; and
- Promote the development and maintenance of an economic and coordinated natural gas industry.

Our work involves:

- Issuing and maintaining licences for gas, electricity, and water companies to operate in Northern Ireland;
- Making sure that these companies meet relevant legislation and licence obligations;
- Challenging these companies to keep the prices they charge as low as they can be;
- Encouraging regulated companies to be more efficient and responsive to customers;
- Working to encourage competition in the gas, electricity, water, and sewerage services markets;
- Setting the standards of service which regulated companies provide to customers in Northern Ireland; and
- Acting as an adjudicator on certain customer complaints, disputes, and appeals.

We hold concurrent competition law powers and are Northern Ireland's competition authority for its electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries. We have quasi-judicial powers to determine certain complaints, disputes, and appeals.

In order to help us protect the interests of electricity, gas and water consumers in Northern Ireland, we work with a range of partner organisations. These include:

- Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly;
- Northern Ireland Government departments;
- Energy and water utility companies;
- The Consumer Council for Northern Ireland;
- Government departments and bodies in Great Britain and Ireland, including Ofgem, Ofwat, the Water Industry Commission for Scotland, and the Commission for Regulation of Utilities; and
- Non-governmental organisations.

### 3. About the role

**Role:** Project and Assurance Analyst  
**Directorate:** CEO  
**Line Manager:** Project Management and Quality Assurance Manager

#### Terms and conditions:

**Contract:** Permanent. flexible working arrangements will be considered, including part-time working.  
**Hours:** 37 hours per week.  
**Salary:** £43,312 to £54,139 per annum  
**Pension:** Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) pension arrangements  
**Holidays:** 25 days per annum (rising to 30 days after two years), and an additional 12 public and privilege days.

**We may create a reserve list from this competition to fill any additional suitable similar analyst roles.**

#### Role purpose

As a Project and Assurance Analyst, you will be responsible for working as part of our project management and quality assurance team, supporting the development and deployment of project and quality assurance programmes, in line with recognised best practice across the Utility Regulator.

#### Main responsibilities

Your main responsibilities are set out below. This list is not exhaustive and will change over time according to organisational need and evolution. You will:

- Display the values of the Utility Regulator, and the NICS's Code of Ethics.
- Support the Project Management and Quality Assurance Manager in ensuring projects are managed in accordance with appropriate project and risk management processes, whilst holding individuals accountable for their responsibilities. This includes undertaking project and quality assurance compliance reviews and audits to identify areas of non-compliance and improvements.
- Support the development and deployment of project and quality assurance programmes, standards and procedures, in line with recognised best practice across the Utility Regulator.
- Support the design and plan of the Utility Regulator's Forward Work Programme and Corporate Strategy and proactively monitor its progress, resolving issues and initiating appropriate corrective action.

- Plan, organise and prioritise own workload to ensure project objectives are met on time and project managers are kept informed of project progress and escalating problems where necessary.
- Monitor and analyse performance data to ensure the processes of the Utility Regulator align with current policies and best practice.
- Analyse data to find areas for improvement and contribute towards finding organisational efficiencies and improve value for money.
- Support the Project Management and Quality Assurance Manager in ensuring staff receive appropriate project management advice and regular training, which includes delivering presentations where appropriate.
- Support the Project Management and Quality Assurance Manager with the delivery of the Utility Regulator's Internal Audit Plan.
- In conjunction with the Project Management and Quality Assurance Manager identify and work through constraints and risks to ensure compliance with the Risk Management Strategy and project performance.
- Monitor and manage project and contract agreed budgets, whilst ensuring project benefits are delivered and lessons learnt are shared and actioned.
- Build and maintain constructive relationships with a broad range of internal and external stakeholders of the Utility Regulator at all levels.
- Present information about projects and initiatives to a wide range of stakeholders in a formal setting. Persuade staff of the importance of change and the need for the project.
- Support the development and continuous improvement of external accreditations, such as Customer Service Excellence and the Institute of Customer Service's Service Mark to drive internal quality standards.
- Have excellent written and verbal skills to explain and train staff on processes and improvements, which includes delivering presentations.
- Work with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders to deliver project plans and quality assurance audits, ensuring any conflicts are proactively and effectively resolved.
- Create and maintain a professional and positive organisational culture that promotes the Utility Regulator's values that inspires, guides and develops staff. This includes supporting the development of quality assurance programmes, processes and procedures, along with external standards to improve efficiencies, effectiveness, value for money insight, culture, information, delivery, timeliness and quality of service.

- Develop and embed a customer focused culture.
- Promote an inclusive team environment and culture based on openness, inclusiveness, transparency and professionalism across all aspects of the Utility Regulator's operational activities and service delivery.
- Have expert knowledge of the Utility Regulator's processes, and how they impact service delivery. Achieving our statutory aims to strengthen the profile, reputation and relevancy of the Utility Regulator to staff, consumers, stakeholders and industry.
- Be required to have direct line management responsibilities should there be further expansion within the team.

**This list is not exhaustive and the postholder will be required to carry out other duties as allocated by management.**

## 4. Selection criteria

### Essential criteria (for all candidates)

Please note you will be required to **demonstrate fully** the following essential criteria on the **application form to be shortlisted for the next stage of the process.**

1. At least two years' demonstrable experience developing and using project management techniques to successfully deliver organisational projects and/or service improvements within agreed timeframes against a range of challenging targets/objectives.
2. At least two years' demonstrable experience within a public sector or regulatory environment conducting and advising on compliance reviews or audits to inform effective decision making and continuous improvements.
3. Demonstrable experience of building constructive and collaborative relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders to successfully deliver complex organisational projects.
4. Demonstrable experience of delivering and implementing new processes or procedures, including the delivery of training, to achieve organisational objectives.
5. Proven experience of developing a positive values-based culture within a team, and the commitment to further workplace values that align to those of the Utility Regulator.

### Desirable criteria



In the event of a large number of applicants, the following desirable criteria will be used as further shortlisting criteria. This criteria **should be demonstrated on the application** form and may be tested further at the interview stages.

1. An accreditation in project management and/or a quality management system.

### Key skills and competencies

In addition to satisfying the above essential criteria, **applicants will be expected to display the following competencies and skills at interview and assessment stages.**

Professional knowledge/skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to develop knowledge as 'subject expert' in work area.</li> <li>• Ability to take a high degree of individual responsibility and carefulness in approach to work.</li> </ul>
Analytical rigour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expert ability in the use of software tools for project management, quality assurance, analysis, and modelling.</li> <li>• High-level of attention to detail and accuracy.</li> <li>• Ability to use complex analysis to resolve problems.</li> <li>• Ability to use analysis to investigate and recommend options.</li> </ul>
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to apply best practice and work within organisational legal and governance requirements.</li> <li>• Ability to identify risks.</li> <li>• Ability to demonstrate strong alignment to corporate goals and messages.</li> </ul>
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong oral and written communication and interpersonal skills.</li> <li>• Positive and proactive alignment with the Utility Regulator's values.</li> <li>• Ability to work positively and collaboratively with individuals and in teams.</li> </ul>
Relationship management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level of negotiation and influencing skills.</li> <li>• Ability to develop and build positive and trusted relationships with a wide variety of colleagues and external stakeholders.</li> <li>• Ability to positively challenge colleagues and stakeholders at all levels.</li> <li>• A proactive, collaborative, and flexible attitude, with ability to work in partnership.</li> </ul>
Strategic thinking and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to take personal ownership of work streams and drive forward to conclusion with minimum supervision.</li> <li>• Ability to contribute to and support the delivery of projects.</li> <li>• Ability to operate in a fast-changing environment.</li> <li>• Ability to think creatively, to innovate and resolve problems.</li> <li>• Support planning and delivery of a substantial workload.</li> </ul>
Managing resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manages competing deadlines to successfully deliver objectives.</li> <li>• Work well under tight deadlines and with a high degree of individual responsibility.</li> <li>• Ability to demonstrate project management skills, including organisational, time management, risk management and problem-solving skills.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to demonstrate quality management skills to consistently provide services that meet customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.</li> <li>• Demonstrate the ability to enhance processes for improvement and the assurance of conformity to applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.</li> <li>• Ability to support and staff and team members to achieve results.</li> </ul>
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### Competency framework

You may wish to consider our competency framework when completing your application. A copy is provided with this recruitment pack.

## 5. The selection process

### How to apply

Completed application forms must be received by **9:00am on Monday 12 February 2024**.

**Please submit your application by email, in MS Word format. A typed or scanned signature will be accepted. Please submit your completed equal opportunities monitoring form in a separate email labelled clearly 'Monitoring Form' in the subject line.** The onus is on you to ensure your application is received before the closing date and we will use the time it is received according to our computer systems not the time sent from your email account.

Applications and queries must be emailed to [recruitment@uregni.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@uregni.gov.uk)

If you have a disability and require assistance, we will facilitate this on request. If you wish to receive this information pack in an accessible format, please advise of your requirements as soon as possible as the closing date is the same for all applicants.

### Monitoring form

We monitor applications for employment in terms of community background, sex, disability and race. You should note that this information is regarded as part of your application and failure fully to complete and return it will result in disqualification.

The use and confidentiality of community background information is protected by the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. It will be used only for monitoring, investigations, or proceedings under the requirements of the above legislation.

We are committed to equality of opportunity and welcome applications from all suitably qualified applicants irrespective of age, sexual orientation, marital status/civil partnership, dependants, religious belief, political opinion, gender reassignment, race, sex or disability.

### Job applicant's privacy notice

We are the data controller for the personal information you provide as an individual seeking employment. This means we determine the purposes for which, and the manner in which, any personal information relating to your application and the recruitment procedure generally is processed. We are required under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to notify you of the information contained in our Job Applicant's Privacy Notice. This notice describes how we collect and use personal information during the recruitment

process and afterwards in accordance with GDPR and can be downloaded, in full, from <https://www.uregni.gov.uk/publications/gdpr-privacy-notice>

## Applications

In order to help you make this application and ensure that each applicant is provided with the same opportunity, the following advice is offered:

- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who will probably not know your employer or your job. Include concise examples and be sure you can expand on these at interview.
- Listing the titles of the various jobs which you have held will not show how you meet the criteria. The panel will not make assumptions about skills and experience gained from these or the nature/name of the organisation.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write 'I' statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out the piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- Identify relevant examples – this is very important as examples you provide may be checked out at interview and you need to be prepared to talk about them in detail if invited to interview. It is your unique role the panel is interested in, not your team's.

An application form is designed to ensure you provide the necessary information to determine how you meet the eligibility/short listing criteria required for this post. The panel may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information provided on your application, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability.

Please note to ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants:

- On the application form you have been advised of the maximum space available for each question. This is the same for all applicants and must not be altered (except to delete spaces created when you type in your answer);
- CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of, or in addition to, completed application forms will not be accepted;
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing deadline. Incomplete application forms will not be considered. Application forms received after the closing deadline or reformatted will not be accepted;
- Please note that the time of receipt of emailed applications will be defined by our, not the time and date sent; and
- Only details provided by you on your application form (employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining eligibility and shortlisting for the post.

## Assessing your application

After the closing date, the first stage in the selection process will be a sift of completed application forms against the essential criteria. **You must demonstrate on the relevant page of the application form how you meet each of criteria stated. If you do not fully demonstrate by example how you meet each of the criteria, you will not progress to the next stage. Please note, the panel will not refer to the employment history section to demonstrate a requirement for a number of years' experience.**

You will be notified of the outcome (successful/unsuccessful) by email.

### Assessment and interview

Following shortlisting, the selection process will involve an assessment and interview against **criteria, key skills and competencies**. The panel may test any aspect of essential, desirable criteria or key skills.

Additional selection stages may be needed. We intend that the assessment and interview process will take place at Queens House in Belfast. You will be informed of assessment and interview arrangements closer to the time and notified of the outcome (successful or unsuccessful) by email.

### Disability requirements at interview

We ask on this application form if you require any reasonable adjustments (special requirements), due to disability, to enable you to attend interview. Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

If you have indicated that you have a disability and are successful in the selection process and being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider needed to take up an appointment. If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further, please email [recruitment@uregni.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@uregni.gov.uk).

### Further information

Further information about our work can be found at [www.uregni.gov.uk](http://www.uregni.gov.uk). Should you have any further queries about the recruitment and selection process then please email [recruitment@uregni.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@uregni.gov.uk).

### Checklist for applicants

- Application form (emailed by closing date)
- Equality monitoring form (emailed in a separate email)

## 6. Benefits of working for us

These headline terms will be included (amongst others) in a written contract of employment.

### Key employee benefits

#### Your salary

This is a permanent, full-time post. However flexible working arrangements will also be actively considered. The starting base salary will be in the range of £43,312 to £54,139 per annum. If you are successful, you will normally be offered the first point on the scale. You will be paid monthly in arrears via Bankers Automated Clearing Service (BACS).

#### Your pension

If you are successful, you will be employed as a civil servant and, as such, automatically enrolled into the NICS pension arrangements. **Employer's contribution for this salary range is 30.7%**. This is a generous, defined benefit pension scheme. Information about pensions can be found at [www.finance-ni.gov.uk/topics/working-northern-ireland-civil-service/civil-service-pensions-ni](http://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/topics/working-northern-ireland-civil-service/civil-service-pensions-ni)

#### Your holiday entitlement

Holiday entitlement will be pro-rated based on **25 days per annum (increasing to 30 days after two years' continuous service) and 12 public and privilege holidays**. If, in your current role, you have already attained 30 days' leave by dint of service with the Northern Ireland or Great Britain Civil Service, your entitlement will be 30 days from your start date (pro-rated).

### Non-salary benefits

We offer a range of non-salary benefits including a supportive family friendly environment, flexible working in a hybrid setting, Childcare Voucher Scheme, generous leave including special leave, maternity/paternity entitlement, wellbeing and employee programme (Inspire), supported learning and development, Cycle to Work Scheme, season ticket loan, payroll giving, volunteering opportunities and a culture that supports diversity and inclusion.

### Hours of work

**This is a full-time appointment. However flexible working arrangements will be considered.** Our offices are open for business between 7am and 7pm (Monday to Friday). You may avail of 'flexitime', provided it meets business needs, with flexible start and finish times outside core hours of 10am to 4pm. Due to the nature of your position, you may be required to work such additional hours, over and above your standard hours, (37 hours excluding meal breaks) as necessary for the proper fulfilment of your duties for which no additional payment will be made.

### Place of work

If appointed, you will be our employee and based at Queens House, Queen Street, Belfast. From 1 March 2024, we are operating a hybrid working pattern, which is an average of 40% of all staff's working hours to be in person with colleagues, either on-site at Queens House or on official business. This hybrid working pattern is all subject to business need. The home working element of hybrid working is voluntary and while you may opt to be office based, we welcome applicants whose circumstances lend themselves to a degree of remote working.

### Mobility

Excluding secondment opportunities, employment does not confer any right of mobility or transfer to a position in any other part of NICS (including any government department or agency) or to any non-departmental public body or other public body.

### Probationary period

There will be a probationary period of six months and continued employment is dependent on the outcome of this. During the probationary period, your performance will be regularly monitored and we reserve the right to extend it for such further period or periods as considered reasonably necessary to assess your performance further.

### Additional information

If you are being considered for appointment, we will ask you to complete the AccessNI application form for a **basic disclosure certificate**. Full details will be provided with an offer of employment. Instructions can be found at [www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni).

You should not be put off applying because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner and information relating to convictions is

destroyed after a decision is made. Criminal record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

As a Utility Regulator employee, you will be subject to various office policies, for example, rules on shareholdings, conflicts of interest and future appointments.

### Right to work and nationality requirements

Offers of employment will be made on merit but we must ensure you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom (UK). Offers will be made on condition of proof of right to work and pre-employment checks will be conducted. You will need to show one of the following:

- Passport;
- National Identity Card or Home Office registration certificate; and
- UK Border Agency work document if you need permission to work.

As an employer, we can face unlimited fines if we employ illegal workers and so must make sure no one we employ is working illegally. However, to protect against discrimination laws, we should treat all job applicants equally. So do not be offended if you are asked to prove your nationality as even UK nationals will be asked to provide proof. For further support on working in Northern Ireland, please visit [www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/working-northern-ireland](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/working-northern-ireland) or [www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/what-you-need-to-do](http://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/what-you-need-to-do)

**Please note that, if your application is shortlisted for interview, you will be asked to provide one of the above documents. Should you fail to do so, you may not be eligible to proceed. The successful candidate will be required to produce the same document in its original format before commencing employment.**

## Meet some of our staff:

### STAFF PROFILE **Kenny McPartland** Analyst in the Networks Directorate

*Kenny has worked as a Networks analyst since joining the UR in October 2019.*

*Kenny says “I have had the opportunity to work across various areas of Networks, but mainly within Electricity Connections and Network Codes. I have also worked within System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI) price control and SONI governance teams, which has been a great experience. However, my work today focuses mainly on all things electricity connections and Network Codes.”*

*Kenny holds a BSc in Environmental Planning and MSc in Spatial Regeneration from Queens University.*



### STAFF PROFILE **Sarah Maybin** Legal Advisor within the Chief Executive Office Directorate

*Sarah holds a Law (Eng/NI) LLB (Hons) degree from the University of Dundee. She studied for her Legal Practice qualification at Kaplan Law School in London, qualifying as a solicitor in London after a two year training contract and working in law since qualifying.*

*She has worked as a Legal Advisor since joining the Utility Regulator in late February 2019. Sarah says “I have been involved in a wide variety of matters across the Utility Regulator directorates. My advice has spanned from everything from governance matters to commercial and regulatory law to data protection issues.”*

