

Guide for Applicants

Price Controls Director

Key dates for applicants:

Closing date: 2:00pm, Tuesday 10 September 2024.

Interviews will take place w/c 23 September 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. Message from John French, Chief Executive

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for taking the time to read this Guide for Applicants for the role of Price Controls Director at the Utility Regulator.

This is an exciting time to join us, as we are expanding as an organisation so that 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 as the next step in your career path.

We are an employer of choice and 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 also been successful in gaining the Investors in People Silver award, together with the Diversity Mark and Disability Confident: Committed accreditations.

Working as Price Controls Director you will have a significant leadership role in leading, advocating for and delivering the Utility Regulator's Corporate Strategy objectives and Forward Work Plan in relation to price controls. The successful candidate will lead price controls across gas, electricity and water.

This is a permanent, full-time role. 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 the Utility Regulator

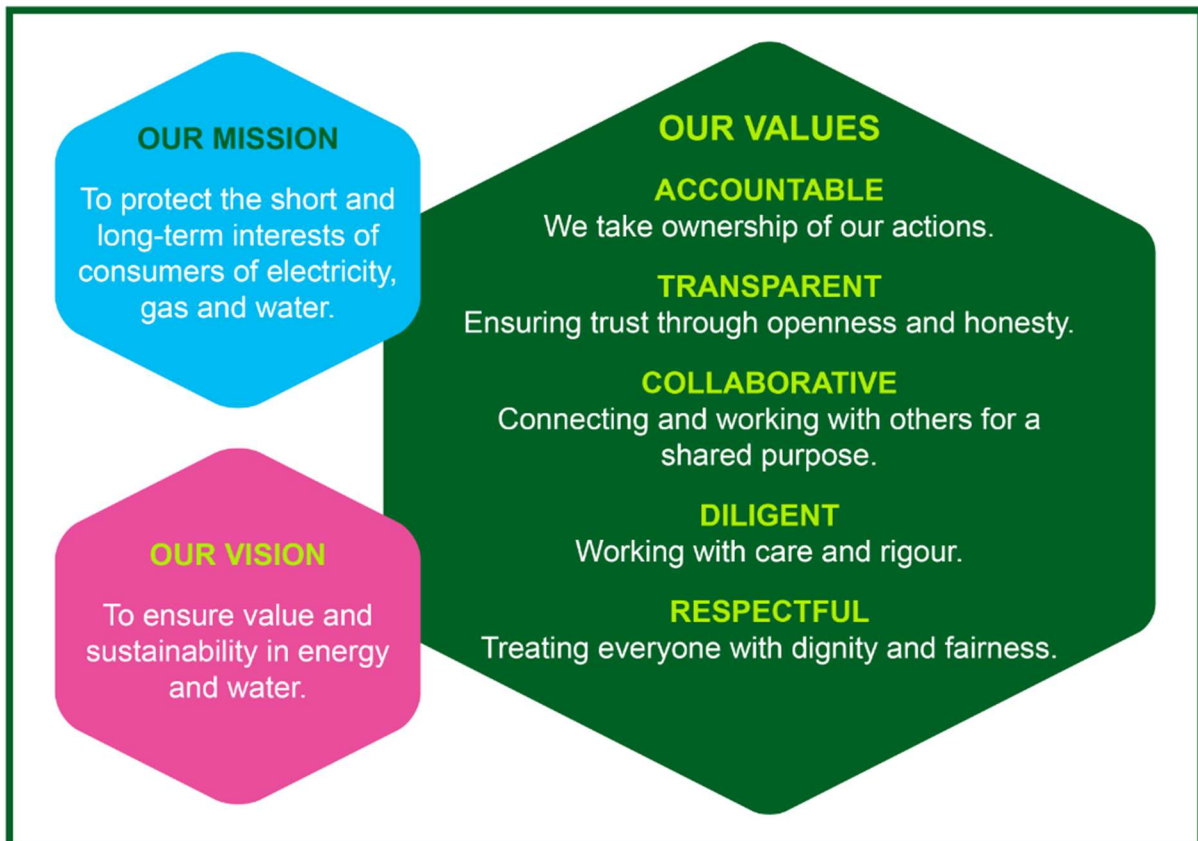
The Utility Regulator (UR/our/we) is the independent non-ministerial government department responsible for regulating Northern Ireland’s electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries, to promote the short and long-term interests of consumers.

We are not a policy-making department of government, but we make sure that the energy and water utility industries in Northern Ireland are regulated and developed within ministerial policy as set out in our statutory duties.

We are governed by a Board of Directors and are accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly through financial and annual reporting obligations.

We are based at Queens House in the centre of Belfast. The Chief Executive and two Executive Directors lead teams in each of the main functional areas in the organisation: CEO Office; Price Controls; Networks and Energy Futures; and Markets and Consumer Protection. The staff team includes economists, engineers, accountants, utility specialists, legal advisors and administration professionals.

Our mission, vision and values



Our diversity statement

Be UR Self

We recognise and value that everyone is unique and that we all have different

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minds. We want to celebrate 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.

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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.

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3. About the role

Role: Price Controls Director
Directorate: Price Controls
Line manager: Executive Director Price Controls, Networks and Energy Futures

Terms and conditions:

Contract: Permanent. Flexible working arrangements will be considered.
Hours: 37 hours per week.
Salary: Circa £102,946 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.

Role purpose

Working as Price Controls Director, the post-holder will have a significant leadership role in leading, advocating for and delivering the Utility Regulator's Corporate Strategy objectives and Forward Work Plan in relation to price controls. The post-holder will lead price controls across gas, electricity and water.

Main responsibilities

The main responsibilities of the role are set out below. **Please note that this list is not exhaustive and will change over time according to organisational need and evolution:**

- To support the Chief Executive, Board and Executive Leadership Team of the Utility Regulator.
- To be a visible senior leader within the Utility Regulator and have the ability to build, inspire and motivate inclusive, high-performing teams.
- To have an up-to-date knowledge of good governance standards, corporate planning and best practice.
- To lead on, advocate for and deliver the Utility Regulator's Corporate Strategy objectives in relation to consumer protection, compliance and enforcement.
- To develop and maintain collaborative relationships with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders to achieve optimal results for the Utility Regulator.
- To have an in-depth knowledge and lead on all electricity, gas and water price controls across the Utility Regulator and look to implement best practice into the Northern Ireland market.
- To lead and embed organisational change within the Price Controls Directorate to improve organisational excellence, performance, pace, professionalism and value for money. To provide challenge and hold others to account.
- To have the energy and drive to challenge accepted thinking and engage and enthuse the directorate to achieve timely results, whilst having an eye for detail.
- To be credible, a powerful advocate for your work areas, and to have ambassadorial instincts to build and nurture constructive working relationships

with a broad range of influential stakeholders. These include the Department for the Economy, Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure, Consumer Council for Northern Ireland, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, Commission for Regulated Utilities, Ofwat and Ofgem.

- To have an up-to-date knowledge of the Northern Ireland, United Kingdom and all-island regulatory environment, and the public sector generally, including the democratic, political and organisational framework.
- Display the values of the Utility Regulator (see page 4) and the Northern Ireland Civil Service's Code of Ethics.
- Work openly and collaboratively as a member of the Senior Leadership Team, ensuring the Utility Regulator is led effectively to achieve its statutory and strategic duties and goals.
- Demonstrate strong intellectual and analytical capabilities, and possess the ability to identify opportunities, assess risks and sound judgment in relation to regulation, policy and organisational issues.
- Be committed to promoting and enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion, and building an open and accountable workplace where all staff have the opportunity to make a real difference.
- Undertake media and public activity around the Price Control Directorate's activities.
- Understand and apply best practice project management standards to projects within the Utility Regulator, ensuring timely delivery against challenging deadlines, whilst maintaining quality and working agilely.
- Deliver a culture that promotes the Utility Regulator's values, inspires and develops staff, values staff contributions, encouraging proactive performance, communication and engagement at all levels through visible and collective leadership.
- To stay up-to-date with regulatory and policy developments in relation to price controls, whilst providing an excellent level of service.
- To understand and display the principles of good regulation and their practical application.
- To be an able and accessible mentor and manager to colleagues within your directorate, committed to developing a talented cohort of staff, embedding the highest level of capabilities and expectations and fostering a culture of inclusion and equal opportunity for all.
- To promote a culture of openness, inclusiveness and transparency across all aspects of the Utility Regulator's operational activity and service delivery.

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

Our statutory remit and organisational structure are continuing to evolve. It is therefore quite possible that the scope of the advertised role will evolve with consequential changes to the job description.

4. Selection criteria

This role is well suited to value driven leaders with:

- Outstanding communication skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills.
- Strong negotiation and influencing skills.
- Strong skills managing teams and individuals to deliver complex work programmes against challenging timetables.
- High level of analytical skills.
- Strong leadership skills.
- Ability to operate and influence at Board level and within a Board context.
- Ability to work in collaboration with other stakeholders to achieve shared objectives.

Essential criteria (for all candidates)

Please note that you will be required to **demonstrate fully** the following essential criteria (1-5) on the **application form** to be shortlisted for the next stage of the process.

1. More than five years' demonstrable experience of advising on or working at a senior level* on price controls in regulated sectors (energy, water, transport, finance or communications).
2. Demonstrable experience of advising on or developing and implementing price control policy with stakeholders, at a senior level*.
3. Proven experience of successfully leading and managing the performance of a team.
4. Proven experience of project management to deliver quality outcomes from work programmes to tight timeframes and whilst under competing pressures.
5. Ability to positively demonstrate, by examples, an understanding of, and commitment to, leading workplace values that align to those of the Utility Regulator. Our mission, vision and values can be found on page 4 of this pack.

*Senior level refers to senior leadership team or board level.

Desirable criteria

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

1. Proven experience of leading significant price controls to successful conclusion in regulated sectors.

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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.**

<p>Leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, instil and model our values and support the delivery of Investors in People action plans. • Mentor Heads of Function, Managers and other staff within the Price Controls Directorate to ensure that they behave corporately in their outlook. • Demonstrate importance of a collaborative approach by working closely with other Directors and directorates, industry participants and external advisors.
<p>Financial management and governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure tight profiling of staff and professional services and deliver accurate budget forecasting. • Ensure spending within the directorate achieves value for money and complies with Utility Regulator corporate governance and principles of regularity and propriety. • Participate in Senior Leadership Team budget planning and review process. • Justify allocation of resources to maximise effectiveness and cost efficiency in providing directorate services. • Ensure compliance with the requirements of the Northern Ireland Civil Service handbook and the Northern Ireland Civil Service Managing Public Money document.
<p>People</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong leadership skills with the ability to develop teams and individuals to enhance performance and meet business objectives. • Strong oral and written communication and interpersonal skills. • Positive and proactive alignment with the Utility Regulator's values. • Ability to lead and manage talented professional staff, ideally both individually and in teams. • Ability to lead, motivate and forge effective relationships at all levels internally and externally. • Manage directorate workload and staff in line with Utility Regulator human resources policies and procedures. • Ensure work planning and appraisal tasks are completed on time and to agreed standards. • Ensure that performance management and development opportunities are identified and facilitated for directorate staff.

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Relationship management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior liaison with the energy industry including market participants and representative bodies. • Develop constructive and appropriate relationships with the senior leadership team, Commission for Regulation of Utilities, Ofwat, Ofgem and, as necessary, other regulators and senior staff in the regulated companies and market participants. • Act as a spokesperson for the Utility Regulator as required, for example, at conferences and media interviews.
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipate and predict the long-term impact of national and international developments, including economic, political, legislative, environmental, social and technological on Price Controls. • Identify and shape how price controls fit within and support the work of the Utility Regulator. • Create joined-up strategies and plans that have positive impact and add value for stakeholders. • Shape strategies and plans which help put into practice and support the Utility Regulator's Corporate Strategy and long-term direction. • Develop insight into the dynamics and issues relating the Northern Ireland Civil Service and Utility Regulator including political, legislative, economic, social, environmental and technological impacts.
Risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own the directorate risk register as a key contribution to corporate planning. • Identify, implement and manage appropriate measures to minimise risk to the effective operation of the directorate. • Participate in corporate risk management and processes.

Competency Framework

You may wish to consider the Utility Regulator's Senior Leadership Team Competency Framework when completing your application. A copy can be downloaded alongside this recruitment pack.

5. The recruitment and selection process

How to apply

Completed application forms must be received by **2:00pm, Tuesday 10 September 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. 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.

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 www.uregni.gov.uk/publications/gdpr-privacy-notices.

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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, for example, 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 computer systems, 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 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, where the criteria requires experience for a minimum length of time, the panel will not refer to the employment history section to demonstrate this. You must state the dates in your answer.

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

Assessment and interview

Following shortlisting, it is intended that the selection process will involve an assessment and interview against **the criteria, key skills and competencies** for the role. Panels may test any aspect of either the essential 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.

Further information

Further information about the work of the Utility Regulator can be found at www.uregni.gov.uk.

Should you have any further queries about the recruitment and selection process then please email 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

The starting base salary will be circa £102,946 per annum. 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 34.25%**. 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

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, 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). 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. We operate a hybrid working pattern, which is an average of 40% of all staff working hours to be in person with colleagues, either on-site at Queens House or on official business. This hybrid working pattern is 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.

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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.

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.

Proof of Right to Work in the UK and visa conditions

As part of our pre-employment checks, we are required by law to verify your right to work in the United Kingdom. The following conditions related to your employment with the Utility Regulator are detailed below.

You must provide satisfactory evidence of your right to work in the United Kingdom prior to commencing employment. Acceptable documents include, but are not limited to:

- A valid passport.
- National identity card or Home Office registration certificate.
- United Kingdom Border Agency work document if you need permission to work.

Employers can face unlimited fines if they employ illegal workers and need to make sure that no one they employ is working in the United Kingdom illegally. However, to protect themselves against discrimination laws they should treat all job applicants equally. So don't be offended if you're asked to prove your nationality, as all those who are made an offer of employment will be asked to provide proof of right to work. Please refer to the Home Office guidelines for a complete list of acceptable documents.

If your right to work in the United Kingdom is based on a visa or work permit, any

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future offer of employment is conditional upon:

- You providing a copy of your valid visa or work permit.
- The duration of which your visa or work permit covers.
- You maintaining your right to work status throughout your employment.

For further support on working in Northern Ireland, please visit www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/working-northern-ireland or 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.