

Guide for Applicants

Associate Regulatory Analyst

Key dates for applicants:

Closing date: 2:00pm, Thursday 2 May 2024

Interviews are expected to take place mid-late May.

Contents

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

Section 1: A message from John French, Chief Executive

Section 2: About us, Northern Ireland's Utility Regulator

Section 3: About the role

Section 4: Selection criteria

Section 5: The recruitment and selection process

Section 6: Benefits of working for us

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 Associate Regulatory 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 also been successful in gaining the Investors in People Silver award, together with the Diversity Mark and Disability Committed accreditations.

As an Associate Regulatory Analyst, you are responsible for assisting in the analysis of energy (electricity and gas) and water issues, as they relate to consumers in Northern Ireland and to the companies we regulate. You will play an active role in supporting the organisation as it supports government initiatives as part of the net-zero climate change transition.

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. This 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: Associate Regulatory Analyst
Directorate: Cross directorate
Line Manager: Regulatory Analyst

Terms and conditions:

Contract: Permanent. Flexible working arrangements will be considered, including part-time working.
Hours: 37 hours per week.
Salary: £30,181 to £33,043 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.

Our Associate Regulatory Analyst role will provide you with the opportunity to commence your career in the Utility Regulator by gaining a breadth of knowledge about regulated utilities and how we are a best-practice regulatory organisation.

It will provide you with the opportunity to develop your skills as a subject matter expert, in a permanent role. Your work area will be based in one of our key functional areas: Networks and Energy Futures; Price Controls; Markets; Consumer and Business Protection. However, you will have the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues across other work areas and enjoy access to some of the most senior and experienced professionals in Northern Ireland's regulatory field.

Role purpose:

Working as an Associate Regulation Analyst within the Utility Regulator, you will be responsible for assisting in the analysis of energy (electricity and gas) and water issues, as they relate to consumers in Northern Ireland and to the companies we regulate. In addition, you will play an active role in supporting the organisation as it supports government initiatives as part of the net-zero climate change transition.

You will have the opportunity to work across a variety of functions within a team-based environment, and actively contribute to the delivery of Utility Regulator aims and objectives. This role is ideally suited for someone with a keen eye for detail, strong analytical skills, clear communication skills, an ability to weigh up arguments and a desire to do the right thing in the right way.

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.

- Demonstrate good teamworking drive.
- Demonstrate a keen attention to detail and wanting to work to high quality standards.
- Display excellent organisational and prioritisation skills.
- Display commitment to develop analytical skills and knowledge and contribute to projects where required.

The work will involve supporting your team in the following ways:

- Assist in the provision of regulatory analysis and advice relating to utility regulation.
- Monitor, review and challenge submissions made by regulated energy and water companies.
- Be a clear communicator and support your team to provide analysis, advice and guidance to the Chief Executive, Board, and senior leadership team.
- Contribute where required to management papers and policy documents (such as internal memos, consultations, decisions and guidance).
- Be proactive, collaborative and flexible in a fast-changing environment.
- Develop and maintain an awareness of legal issues and risks in relation to energy and water regulation.
- Contribute to projects as required, and in-line with best practice project management principles.
- Ensure work is accurate, strive for a 'right first time' approach to your work, and deliver it on time.
- Respond to external queries and consultations in a timely manner.
- Develop positive working relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
- Help team members deliver by building a supportive, inclusive team environment based on trust-based relationships, transparency, professionalism and inclusivity.
- Promote a culture of, and take responsibility for your own, health and safety.

Key responsibilities

For each Associate Regulatory Analyst, the main duties will be:

- To support the Utility Regulator in the delivery of our annual work programme and the corporate strategy, and provide a value for money service, underpinned by good governance and project management.
- To support your team to monitor, report and present on policy area, project status and issues to management and Board.
- To ensure effective and positive relationships and partnership working with other parts of the Utility Regulator.
- To undertake analysis as required and to assist in analysing qualitative and quantitative data from a wide range of sources to produce timely insights and reports to inform regulatory development, and in doing so take a structured approach to problem-solving.
- To contribute to maintenance of policies, controls, process, and standards, and ensuring policy and regulatory compliance.
- To build and maintain a strong knowledge of your relevant policy area, investing in continuing professional development where appropriate.
- To assist in strengthening the profile, reputation and relevancy of the Utility Regulator to staff, consumers, stakeholders and industry.

- To promote a culture of openness, inclusiveness and transparency across all aspects of the Utility Regulator's operational activity and service delivery.

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

Development

Developing your skills and expertise will be a core part of the employment package offered and you will operate in a team environment helping you to progress. Cross directorate work experience in the Utility Regulator will also be part of your valuable development. Therefore, while the developing Associate Analyst role will remain within the assigned directorate, focused training will be identified, along with ensuring opportunities to collaborate with other teams across the organisation, when possible.

An assigned mentor in the form of an experienced analyst will also be selected to support you as a developing analyst.

Your career

You may apply for roles which are externally advertised by Utility Regulator, which will require you to demonstrate how you meet the essential criteria through the application process.

However, Utility Regulator wants to develop and retain our growing talent and as an Associate Analyst we will help you on that career path. Therefore, when you have at least two years' service as a Utility Regulator Associate Analyst, and provided you have a satisfactory box marking across all aspects of performance and conduct within that period, you may declare an interest in any externally advertised Analyst role and will automatically be shortlisted to the selection process, which will include assessment and interview.

4. Selection criteria

This role is well suited to persons with a background in one of the following disciplines:

- Data analysis and statistics;
- Fin-tech;
- Engineering;
- Economics;
- Business and accountancy;
- Regulation;
- Law;
- Geography;
- Computer sciences;
- Numerate;
- Finance;
- Theoretical physics;
- Politics; and
- Other energy, sustainability-related or analytically based subjects.

Essential criteria (for all candidates)

Please note 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.

You should be able to demonstrate one of the following:

1. A 2:1* degree (obtained or expected) in a related discipline. (This includes but is not limited to the subjects listed above);

OR

Have already successfully completed a 51 week under-graduate placement or successfully completed a Higher Level Apprenticeship (HLA) with the Utility Regulator or within another relevant/similar business environment;

OR

Have successfully completed at least one year's working experience in a relevant environment. This includes (but is not limited to) working in a financial, engineering, analytical, energy, Fin-tech or business-related environment.

*You may apply for this role on the basis that you are currently studying towards a related degree and expect to graduate with a 2:1 in 2024. If you are successful at interview, you will be appointed on confirmation of your results.

Candidates placed on reserve lists will be appointed to roles in order of merit and as roles become vacant.

You should be able to demonstrate ALL of the following:

2. Evidence of excellent analytical and numerical skills;
3. Evidence of excellent communication (written and oral) skills;
4. Evidence of team working and building good working relationships; and

5. Evidence of displaying values which are in-line with the Utility Regulator's values** and NI Civil Service Code of Ethics.

** Our mission, vision and values can be found on page 4 of this pack.

There is no time limit to the date of graduation or post-graduate work experience candidates may have. This opportunity is open to graduates and non-graduates of all ages.

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"> • Ability and keenness to develop regulatory knowledge and skills. • Strong digital skills and IT skills. • Ability to plan work and work unaided.
Analytical rigour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to use analytical tools (eg spreadsheets). • High level of attention to detail and accuracy.
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building understanding of best practice and importance of following policy, governance appropriate guidelines and legal requirements.
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong communication and interpersonal skills. • Positive alignment with the Utility Regulator's values. • Excellent verbal communication and writing/drafting skills.
Relationship management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to develop and build positive and trusted relationships. • Ability to positively ask questions to understand a subject. • Ability to work collaboratively within a team.
Strategic thinking and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work proactively with minimum supervision. • Ability to think creatively and problem solve. • Ability to contribute to the delivery of projects.
Managing resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to demonstrate organisational and time management skills. • Ability to balance priorities effectively. • Ability to meet deadlines.

Competency framework

You may wish to consider the Utility Regulator's 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 on Thursday 2 May 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, and 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 <https://www.uregni.gov.uk/publications/gdpr-privacy-notices>

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.

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

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 £30,181 to £33,043 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

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). 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 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.

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 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 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.

Meet some of our staff:

STAFF PROFILE

Kenny McPartland, Analyst in the Networks Directorate

Kenny has worked as a Networks Analyst since joining the Utility Regulator 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 worked across various areas within the Networks Operations, such as the SONI (System Operator for Northern Ireland) 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’s Office

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 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.”

