



Guide for Applicants

Appointment of Placement Student 2020/21 Electricity Regulation

Key Dates for Applicants

Closing Date: 2pm on Tuesday 24 March 2020

Interview Date: Week commencing 30 March 2020

The Utility Regulator

The Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation (the Utility Regulator) is responsible for regulating the electricity and gas industries, and water and sewerage services in Northern Ireland, to promote the short and long-term interests of consumers.

We are a non-ministerial government department and are governed by a Board of Directors.

We make sure the utility industries in Northern Ireland are regulated and developed within Ministerial policies as set out in our statutory duties. The Utility Regulator is accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly through financial and annual reporting obligations.

Electricity Regulation

The main statutory framework for our work in electricity is set out in the Electricity (Northern Ireland) Order 1992, the Energy (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and the Electricity (Single Wholesale Market) (Northern Ireland) Order 2007.

Our principal objective is to protect consumers' interests, wherever appropriate by promoting effective competition, and we have a series of further objectives relating to universal service, financeability, sustainability and vulnerable customers.

Northern Ireland has around 805,000 electricity consumers, with load split around 40% / 60% between domestic and non-domestic customers. This electricity is generated by three main power stations, plus a large number of smaller and renewable stations. Significant volumes are imported from Scotland through the 450MW Moyle interconnector, and there is a 500MW transmission line to the Republic of Ireland. Electricity generation in the island of Ireland is around 60% gas-fired, with peat, coal and wind also being significant fuels.

Northern Ireland belongs to the all-island Single Electricity Market (SEM). This is the only regional market in Europe with fully integrated arrangements for regulation, scheduling, and dispatch, as well as a high level of harmonisation in system operation and network tariff arrangements. The SEM is regulated by the SEM Committee which comprises of an independent member; a deputy independent member; three members currently from the Utility Regulator appointed by the Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI); and three from the Irish Republic's Commission for Energy Regulation (CER).

The Team

We are currently recruiting for a placement student to assist the analysts of our Wholesale directorate in their work of regulating the electricity industry in Northern Ireland and the SEM on the island of Ireland.

This is an excellent opportunity for students to gain valuable work experience, using their economic and IT skills in support of a range of regulatory and public policy issues.

The post holder is expected to be placed within the Market Monitoring and Wholesale Operations team, which is responsible for several areas of SEM regulation, along with the regulation of the transmission system operator SONI, the market operator SEMO and Moyle interconnector.

During their placement, the post holder can expect to play a part in the economic regulation of a number of major utilities, gain an insight into the legislative framework and can expect to contribute to the effective development of regulation policies through involvement in the Regulator's public consultations.

The Role

The role will involve assisting the team with the specification, collation and quantitative analysis of relevant data in order to assess the performance of the SEM and behaviour of SEM market participants. Maintenance and development of the Wholesale directorates SEM database will also form a key part of the role along with liaison with staff in the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) in Dublin.

Tasks may include

- Contributing to briefings for senior management and elected representatives
- Compilation, quality assurance, analyses and the reporting of data
- Database management and data mining
- Presentation of results
- Report writing
- Updating and analysis of relevant economic and data trends
- Contributing to internal / external reports and presentations
- Desk research (including the sourcing and analysis of information and data from a range of sources including public departments, libraries, Internet, annual reports etc.)
- General administration
- Using Word, Excel and PowerPoint
- Using various database and statistical analysis packages such as SQL or Microsoft Power BI
- Exposure to some civil service activities, including:
 - i. tendering & procurement procedure;
 - ii. budgeting;
 - iii. economic appraisal/business case development; plus,
 - iv. project management/planning
- Any other related duties

The Person

We are seeking applications from dynamic and highly motivated persons of exceptional ability and intellect that are able to work well in a team and under their own supervision.

You should be able to work well under pressures of time and workload, have excellent oral and written communication and interpersonal skills, and excellent quantitative analysis skills.

Applicants must:

- a. Be students **currently** studying for a degree which includes economics for at least 40% of course content; **and** have already studied modules in either Microeconomics, Quantitative Analysis, Macroeconomics, Monetary Economics or similar; **OR**
- b. Be students currently studying for a degree in an IT or Mathematical related degree;

AND have successfully completed at least the second year examinations of their degree by end of the 2019/20 academic year; **and** have the opportunity to undertake a one year placement for the 2020/21 academic year.

Strong competency in both Microsoft Word and Excel is essential for the role.

The Utility Regulator is unable to accept applications from students who will complete their degree in 2020/21.

The Utility Regulator holds the right to determine the relevance of a degree.

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications considered by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated.

***Relevant or equivalent** qualifications: give the type of qualification and date awarded (the date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body). If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc. so that a well-informed decision can be made.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Appointment

Candidates will only be appointed if they have successfully completed at least the second year examinations of their degree by end of the 2020/21 academic year.

Those appointed will be employees of the Utility Regulator and will be based at our offices in Queen Street, Belfast.

Appointments will be for a duration of no more than 51 weeks from the date of commencing employment.

Work pattern

The normal hours of work are full-time: 37 hours per week (excluding meal breaks) Monday to Friday. Flexi-time is available.

Annual leave arrangements are currently 25 days annual leave in addition to 12 public and privilege holidays across a calendar year. An annual salary of £15,619 applies.

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

Please note:

- You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.
- If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.
- ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history, eligibility criteria and shortlisting criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post.
- The Utility Regulator may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information available, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability.

Core competences

The Core Competence Framework, which is grade specific, describes what people need to do in order to be effective at work. It is not enough to just have the knowledge and skills to do our jobs. Competence is about what people actually do and how you apply or demonstrate the knowledge and skills whilst carrying out your tasks. Demonstrated competence is observable and measurable.

Interview criteria

In addition to satisfying the above eligibility criteria, applicants will also be expected to display the following qualities and skills (competencies) at interview:

- (i) **Communication and interpersonal skills;**
- (ii) **Sound IT skills;**
- (iii) **A sound economic understanding;**
- (iv) **Quantitative Analysis skills; and**
- (v) **Awareness of the Northern Ireland regulatory scene and the key features of UK utility regulation.**

Making your application

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- We will not examine applications until after the closing deadline.
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc.
- 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 a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.

Application Form Submission

- We will not accept incomplete application forms, application forms received after the closing deadline or reformatted application forms.
- Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to the Utility Regulator.
- We will not accept any application where we are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.
- Applicants are encouraged to download an application form from this website and submit their completed application forms by email if possible to recruitment@uregni.gov.uk
However, all requests for hard copy application packs are welcomed and all applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.
- Applications will be acknowledged by email within two working days from close of competition. **If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please contact the Utility Regulator on 0289031 6672**

Disability Requirements

We will ask on the application form if you require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process. Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process. If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability and are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider necessary in order for you to take up an appointment.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

Please note, this form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it will result in disqualification.

Assessment Information

It is Utility Regulator policy that all candidates invited to attend for interview, bring sufficient documentation to satisfy the eligibility criteria and the Nationality and Vetting requirements. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for assessment. You should ensure that these documents are readily available.

Nationality Requirements

The Utility Regulator must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. The Placement Student posts are classified as Non-Public Service, therefore certain nationality requirements apply. Applicants must be either:

- (i) A UK national; or
- (ii) A Commonwealth citizen; or
- (iii) A British Protected Person; or
- (iv) An EEA national; or
- (v) A Swiss National; or
- (vi) A person who is not an EEA or Swiss national, but is a family member of an EEA national who has moved to the UK from another EEA Member State for an approved purpose.

Further guidance on Nationality requirements may be obtained from the Home Office website, www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk

Vetting Procedures

For Placement Student posts in the Utility Regulator the level of vetting is a Baseline Standard. For this check you will be required to provide the following:

- a) Your passport *OR*
- b) A document verifying your permanent National Insurance number (e.g. P45, P60 or National Insurance card) *AND* your birth certificate which includes the names of your parents (long version).
- c) Other acceptable documents are listed on www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk
- d) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

Criminal Record Check

Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by the Utility Regulator, normally after interview and will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form for a **Basic Disclosure Certificate**. Instructions on the process can be accessed from www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni and you can apply online via this link also.

Please note that a request to complete this form should not be seen as a guarantee of an offer of appointment. Failure to submit the application form to AccessNI and obtain the certificate within the specified time will be regarded as 'no longer interested in the position' and your application will be withdrawn.

You should not 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.

Competence based interviews

Selection panels will design questions to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in each of the above areas and award marks accordingly.

If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:

- Talk through previous jobs or appointments from start to finish;
- Provide generalised information as to your background and experience; or
- Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test.

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

- Focus exclusively, in your responses, on your ability to fulfil the competences required for effective performance in the role; and
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

Appreciating as a student, you may not have significant work experience, you should concentrate on drawing examples and experience from your academic life, personal life or clubs/societies you may belong/have belonged to.

In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:

- Situation – briefly outline the situation;
- Task – what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve;
- Action – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution; and,
- Result – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience in relation to each of the competences. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work or life experiences.

General Information

Completed application forms and other relevant documentation should be returned to recruitment@uregni.gov.uk to arrive no later than **2pm on Tuesday 24 March 2020**.

You must send a hard copy of your Application Form and Equal Opportunities Monitoring form but they may arrive shortly after the closing date so long as the electronic Application Form has been received before the closing date.

Send hard copies to:

Human Resources
Utility Regulator
Queens House
14 Queen Street
BELFAST
BT1 6ED

The Utility Regulator is an Equal Opportunities employer. All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.