

**Guide for Applicants**

**Legal Advisor/Solicitor (Permanent or Secondment)**

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| **Key Dates for Applicants**

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| **Closing Date:** | **2pm on Monday 4th October 2021** |
| **Interview & Assessment Dates:** | **Between 11th and 22nd October 2021** |

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| **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** Role Description**Section 4** Selection Criteria**Section 5** The Recruitment and Selection Process**Section 6** Terms of Appointment |

1. **A Message from John French, Chief Executive**

*Dear Applicant,*

*Thank you for taking time to read this Guide for Applicants. I hope it gives you all the information you need to decide whether to apply for the position of* ***Legal Advisor*** *within Northern Ireland’s Utility Regulator.*

*Electricity, Gas, and Water are essential services that support all homes and business in Northern Ireland. As an economic regulator, our role is to enable, incentivise and hold energy and water companies to account for providing the very best for consumers and society both now and in the future.*

*We are ambitious about the future and we are looking for passionate people who can help us achieve our goals, and actively display our organisational values.*

*I want to make the Utility Regulator the best place to work. To be successful in this, we need to recruit the best candidates from a range of backgrounds. Recently, we have been successful in achieving IIP Silver, and we have gained accreditation with the Diversity Mark and the Disability Committed programmes. This highlights our ongoing commitment to staff wellbeing, inclusion and excellence.*

*This recruitment is focused on the appointment of a Legal Advisor who will play a vital part in delivery of Utility Regulator aims and objectives by advising and assisting in fields of public law, regulatory law, competition law, energy law, environmental law and dispute resolution. This role provides an excellent opportunity to develop your expertise in specialist legal work areas, which are and will be in some demand for years to come in light of the government’s commitment to delivering net zero carbon.*

*Thank you for your interest in joining the Utility Regulator. We will consider a variety of flexible working arrangements and look forward to receiving your application.*



**John French**

**Chief Executive**

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| 1. **About Us, Northern Ireland’s Utility Regulator**
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| We were first established in 1992, following privatisation of the Northern Ireland electricity industry, and our role extended in 1996 to cover gas. From April 2007, we also became the economic and customer service regulator for NI’s water and sewerage industries.We are a non-ministerial government department. Our board currently consists of a chair (Dr Bill Emery) and four other members (Teresa Perchard, Jon Carlton, Alex Wiseman, David De Casseres and Claire Williams), plus the Chief Executive, John French. The office currently employs approximately 92 staff. The Chief Executive heads our Senior Management Team (SMT). The SMT also currently includes the Directors for Retail Markets, Wholesale Markets, Networks and Corporate Affairs. It meets weekly to review matters of common interest, and provides the collegiate leadership of the office.Our Corporate Strategy and annual Forward Work Programme together with further information about organisation, its strategy and our work, may be viewed at [www.uregni.gov.uk](http://www.uregni.gov.uk)  |
| **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:**Be a best practice regulator: transparent, consistent, proportionate, accountable and targeted.Be professional: listening, explaining and acting with integrity.Be a collaborative, co-operative and learning team.Be motivated and empowered to make a difference.**Electricity** Our principal objective is to protect the interests of consumers of electricity supplied by authorised suppliers, wherever appropriate by promoting effective competition between persons engaged in, or in commercial activities connected with, the generation, transmission or supply of electricity. More information can be found at [www.uregni.gov.uk/electricity](http://www.uregni.gov.uk/electricity)  **Retail and Customer Protection**The Retail and Customer Protection directorate was created in 2009 to remove barriers and drive forward work on encouraging gas and electricity suppliers to enter the domestic energy market in Northern Ireland, in order to provide consumers with a choice of supplier.Competition has long been at the heart of the European Union (EU), United Kingdom (UK) and Northern Ireland vision of energy markets. A range of steps at all three levels have sought to promote wholesale and retail energy market competition. The statutory remit given to us places a high value on competition as a means to deliver consumer benefits in the energy retail sector in Northern Ireland. The Directorate also undertakes the role of social protection for consumers.We also have a vital role to play in promoting sustainability, as we are the main gate keepers to infrastructure investment in three sectors with high environmental impact – electricity, gas and water. More information can be found at[www.uregni.gov.uk/retail](http://www.uregni.gov.uk/retail)  |
| **Water** Our main aim is to regulate the water and sewerage industry in Northern Ireland in a way that encourages and incentivises Northern Ireland Water to achieve the highest possible service for customers in terms of both quality and value. More information can be found at [www.uregni.gov.uk/water](http://www.uregni.gov.uk/water)**Networks and Markets**The Networks and Markets Directorate is structured to achieve synergies and efficiencies by taking a cross utility approach to our regulation. This applies a cross utility (gas, electricity, water and sewerage) networks approach and a separate markets approach to regulation. Regulation of markets further divides into the Wholesale Electricity Market regulation of the Single Electricity Market for the island of Ireland and retail regulation in Northern Ireland. **Gas** Natural gas first arrived in Northern Ireland in 1996 and has since brought considerable environmental, economic and social benefits to Northern Ireland. It is the least polluting fossil fuel and its availability in an area provides greater fuel choice for industry. Natural gas also provides domestic customers with the opportunity to convert from inefficient central heating systems to highly efficient gas condensing boilers and in due course to domestic combined heating power. We are responsible for regulating Northern Ireland’s gas industry. Our main duties are to promote the development and maintenance of an economic, efficient and co-ordinated gas industry. We also aim to protect the interests of gas consumers with regard to price and quality of service. More information can be found at [www.uregni.gov.uk/gas](http://www.uregni.gov.uk/gas)**Corporate Affairs**Corporate Affairs includes the Corporate Services team, which is led by the Head of Corporate Services. The team serves the organisation by carrying out a number of key functions including HR, Finance, ICT, Information Management, Facilities and Procurement. Corporate Affairs also includes three other teams covering a range of functions including sustainability, communications and strategy and the in-house legal team.**Other Work Streams**We hold concurrent competition law powers and are Northern Ireland’s competition authority for the industries it regulates. Being uniquely placed as the UK’s only cross-utility regulator creates challenges and opportunities, which we are keen to address over the coming years.We have quasi-judicial powers to determine certain complaints, disputes and appeals.  |

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| 1. **Role Description**
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| **Role: Legal Advisor****Location: Belfast, N. Ireland****Group: Corporate Affairs****Reporting to: Head of Legal****Terms and Conditions:** **Contract:Permanent, full time or part time.**  **Secondment and flexible working arrangements will be considered.****Hours: 37 hours per week (UR operates a flexi-time system)****Salary: £39,969- £49,961 per annum****Pension: Northern Ireland Civil Service pension arrangements****Holidays: 25 days (rising to 30 days), plus 12 public and privilege days** **Role Purpose:**You will be involved in assisting the Utility Regulator in the discharge of its functions relating to economic and customer service regulation for Northern Ireland’s electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries. This will involve the provision of advice and assistance in fields of public law, competition law, company law, energy law, water law, environmental law and dispute resolution. The post will involve occasional travel within the UK and EU Member States. The role itself will also involve some stimulating policy work in areas with a quasi-legal content: sustainability and environmental issues, financial penalties and enforcement, competition issues, freedom of information and data protection issues, complaints, disputes and appeals processes. The role will also carry more routine legal administration responsibilities to be carried out by the successful candidate on behalf of the Legal Department. For example, you will also be involved in managing and working with the UR’s external legal panel.**Key Contacts:****Internal:** Legal consultants, Directors, Heads of Branch, managers, other Utility Regulator staff.**External:**  External industry legal representatives, comparable regulatory bodies, Northern Ireland Civil Service departments, external agencies. |
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| ***Key Areas*** | ***Key Tasks*** |
| **Strategic** | * Provide input to the forward work planning and activities of the Legal Services Department.
* Assist the Head of Legal in reviewing Legal Department strategy.
* Assist the Head of Legal in providing expert legal advice as required on areas of strategic importance to the Utility Regulator.
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| **Operational** | * Assist in providing timely and effective legal advice on all aspects of regulatory law, competition law, public and administrative law, energy law and licensing regimes.
* Drafting licence modifications, legal letters, legislative interpretation advices and providing verbal briefings as and when required on a wide range of areas of law.
* Taking instruction from the Head of Legal as to the co-ordination of external legal advice with the Legal Framework Panel of Advisors.
* Development of organisational expertise in concurrency and competition law fields including advising the Utility Regulator on its effective performance of its National Competition Authority role (which will involve occasional travel to London and Brussels).
* To support the Legal Department identify, report and suggest solutions to legal risks.
* To assist the Legal Department with any litigation cases brought before the NI and/or ROI courts.
* Assisting with Utility Regulator’s enforcement role and advising on its powers and duties.
* To provide legal support on specific projects such as the I-SEM.
* Provide advice to those dealing with Regulatory Appeals, Complaints & Disputes.
* Assist in the co-ordination and response to Freedom of Information requests and other policy matters.
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| **Leadership** | * Assist the Utility Regular to develop the standing and reputation of the Legal Department as a centre of excellence both within the Utility Regulator and with stakeholders.
* Assist in the training and development of Utility Regulator staff as appropriate.
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| **Financial** **Management** | * Assist in the adherence to the expenditure of the Legal Department budget and the Legal Framework Panel budget as appropriate.
* As required, contribute to the evaluation and cost appraisals (including Value for Money) for legal resources, training schemes, and related items.
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| **Quality** | * Assist the Legal Department in ensuring a consistent approach from a legal perspective in relation to internal policies and procedures.
* Assist the Legal Department to develop the standing and reputation of a centre of excellence with respect to Northern Ireland Utility law (both within the Utility Regulator and with service providers, external agencies etc.).
* Maintain a good understanding of the principles and practices within the organisation and the utilities industry.
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| **Health & Safety**  | * Demonstrate responsibility for your own health and safety and that of those with whom you work.
* Contribute to an environment where Health and Safety is promoted and responsibility taken for resolving any issues within the Legal Department e.g. In relation to stress management.
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| **Risk** **Management** | * Input to the Corporate Affairs Directorate Risk Register as required.
* Contribute to identification of legal risks, & strategic risks for Corporate Affairs Directorate and the wider organisation.
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| **Customer Services** | * Respond to external queries and consultations as appropriate.
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| **Equality** | * To contribute to the promotion of equality of opportunity within UR and in the performance of your duties.
* To contribute to the directorate’s equality screening duties where appropriate and in line with Section 75 Duties.
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| **Networking** | * Develop effective working relationship with the Senior Management Team and key members of the regulated companies to ensure effective regulation.
* Provide a direct point of contact between the Utility Regulator and external specialist support.
* Build relationships with Ofgem/Ofwat and other key stakeholders in relation to e.g. strategy and policy development etc.
* Develop relationships with key stakeholders, comparable regulatory bodies, regulated companies and external agencies.
* Act as an ambassador for the Utility Regulator at seminars, training and conferences.
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| *The Utility Regulator’s statutory remit and organisational structure is continuing to evolve. It is therefore quite possible that the scope of the advertised role may evolve significantly with consequential changes to the job description.* |

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| 1. **Selection Criteria**
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| **Essential Criteria**Applicants must demonstrate how they meet the following essential criteria on the application form by the closing date for applications. **Please note you will be required to demonstrate fully the following essential criteria on the application form to be shortlisted for interview.** These essential criteria may also be tested at interview and assessment stages. . 1. A solicitor or barrister, qualified to practice in Northern Ireland or England and Wales\* with proven post qualification experience;
2. Proven experience gained working in either energy/regulatory law and/or public law;
3. Proven ability to analyse complex legal issues and provide clear and concise advice and solutions that resolve business problems;
4. Ability to demonstrate by examples, an understanding of and commitment to workplace values that align to those of the UR. \*\*

***Note:*** *\*Republic of Ireland or other common law jurisdictions may be considered. An overseas qualification is only acceptable if it is fully comparable and equivalent to the UK counterpart. You will be required to present original certificates/documentation if you are invited to the next stage of the selection process.**\*\* UR Mission, Vision and Values can be found on page 3 of this pack.*The following criteria is essential to the role and may also be tested at interview and assessment stages. 1. Proven ability to manage significant workloads with limited resources and deliver outputs in line with client/customer expectations and deadlines; and
2. Proven ability to build and maintain productive communication networks with colleagues and stakeholder organisations.

**Desirable Criteria**In the event of a large number of applicants the following desirable criteria will be used as further short listing criteria:1. Knowledge or experience of Energy law.

**Key Skills & Competencies**In addition to satisfying the above essential criteria, applicants will also be expected to display the following qualities and skills at interview.

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| ProfessionalKnowledge/Skills | * Good knowledge of technical law and the ability to assimilate complex technical information
* Excellent legal drafting skills and attention to detail
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| Analytical Rigour | * Strong analytical skills.
* High level of attention to detail and accuracy.
* Ability use analysis to resolve problems.
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| Governance | * Ability to apply best practice and work within policy and governance.
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| People | * Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and external stakeholder as part of a wider team.
* Strong alignment to workplace values.
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| RelationshipManagement | * Ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and external stakeholder organisations.
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| Strategic thinking& Delivery | * Ability to take ownership of work streams and drive forward to conclusion with minimum supervision.
* Ability to think creatively, to innovate and resolve problems.
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| ManagingResources | * Ability to balance competing demands effectively.
* Work well under pressure and committed to delivering on deadlines.
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Competency FrameworkYou may wish to consider the UR Competency Framework when completing your application. A copy is attached to this recruitment pack |
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| 1. **The Recruitment and Selection Process**
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| **How to Apply**Completed application forms must be received by **2pm on Monday 4th October 2021****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 From” in the subject line.** The onus is on the candidate to ensure their application is received before the closing date and we will use the time it is received according to the UR computer systems, not the time sent from a candidate’s email account.Applications and queries can be emailed to recruitment@uregni.gov.ukApplications will be acknowledged by email within seven days from close of competition. **If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please contact the Utility Regulator at** recruitment@uregni.gov.uk **07805 819 666** or **07903734999.**Candidates with a disability who require assistance will be facilitated upon request. Candidates who wish to receive the information pack in accessible formats are requested to advise of their requirements as promptly as possible allowing for the fact that the closing date for receipt remains the same for all applicants as noted above.***It should be noted that the Utility Regulator may use reserve lists to fill similar, suitable posts within 12 months of competitions.*** **Monitoring Form** The Utility Regulator monitors 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 this part of your application 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. The Utility Regulator is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes 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**The Utility Regulator is the data controller of the personal information you provide to us as an individual seeking employment. This means the Utility Regulator determines the purposes for which and the manner in which any personal information relating to a candidate’s 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 the Utility Regulator Job Applicant’s privacy notice. This privacy notice describes how we collect and use personal information during the recruitment process and afterwards in accordance with the 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 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 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.

An application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the eligibility/short listing criteria required for this post. The panel may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information they have provided on their 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.
* Applicants must complete the application form in either font size 10 to 12, or legible hand writing using black ink. The same limitations on space apply.
* Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications. Incomplete application forms will not be considered. Application forms received after the closing deadline or reformatted application forms will not be accepted.
* Please note that the time of receipt of emailed applications will be defined by the Utility Regulator server, not the time and date sent.
* Only the details provided by you on your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining eligibility and shortlisting for the post.

**Eligibility Sift**After the closing date, the first stage in the selection process will be to conduct a sift of completed application forms against the essential eligibility criteria. **You must demonstrate on the relevant page of the application form how you meet each of the criteria stated.**  **If you do not fully demonstrate by example how you meet each of the eligibility criteria, you will not be progressed to the next stage of the process. 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.**Shortlist**If further short listing is required, the next stage would be to conduct a sift against the desirable criteria. In the event of a large volume of applicants, scored shortlisting against the eligibility criteria may also be used to form a final shortlist. **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 or desirable criteria, or key skills. Additional stages to the selection process may be required. **It is intended that the interview process will take place in Belfast between 11th and 22nd October 2021 inclusive. However, this will be subject to Executive guidance on COVID-19 restrictions and candidates will be informed of interview arrangements closer to the time. You will be notified of the outcome (successful/unsuccessful) by email.**The Utility Regulator’s statutory remit and organisational structure is continuing to evolve. It is therefore possible that the scope of the advertised role may evolve with consequential changes to the job description. **Disability requirements at interview**We will ask on the 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 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. 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 <http://www.uregni.gov.uk>Should you have any further queries about the recruitment and selection process then call the Utility Regulator on 028 9031 1575. |
| **Checklist for Applicants** |
| * Application Form

[ ]  Emailed by closing date |
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| * Equality Monitoring Form

[ ]  Emailed separately, by closing date |

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| 1. **Terms of Appointment**

The following headline terms will subsequently be included (amongst other terms and conditions) in a written contract of employment between you and the Utility Regulator. **Salary****The starting base salary will be in the range of £39,969- £49,961 p.a.**  The successful applicant will initially be offered the first point on the salary scale. You will be paid monthly inarrears via Bankers Automated Clearing Service (BACS).**While this post is offered as a permanent contract we also welcome applications on a secondment or other flexible working basis that will be negotiated post appointment. Consideration will be given to a part-time working pattern and therefore there may be scope to appoint more than one part-time post from this competition.** |
| **Pension**Staff employed by the Utility Regulator are civil servants and as such are automatically enrolled into the Northern Ireland Civil Service pension arrangements. **Employer’s contribution for this salary range is 30.7%.** This is a generous defined benefit type pension scheme. Information about pensions can be found at www.finance-ni.gov.uk/topics/working-northern-ireland-civil-service/civil-service-pensions-ni**Mobility**Excluding secondment opportunities, the Utility Regulator employment does not confer any right of mobility or transfer to a position in any other part of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (including any government department or agency) or to any non-departmental public body or other public body.**Place of Work**The post holder will be an employee of the Utility Regulator and will be based at Queens House, Queen Street, Belfast. ***Please note that, this will be subject to Executive guidance on COVID-19 restrictions and staff are currently working from home remotely****.* ***It is envisioned that the Utility Regulator will adopt a hybrid approach to remote/office working, and while staff may wish to be office based we also welcome applicants whose circumstances lend themselves largely to remote working.*****Hours of Work****This is a full-time appointment, although a part-time working pattern will be considered, therefore there may be scope to appoint more than one part-time post from this competition.** The offices of the Utility Regulator are open for business between the hours of 7am and 7pm Monday – Friday. **Staff may avail of “flexi-time” provided that it meets with the business need, with flexible start and finish times outside the 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 may be necessary for the proper fulfilment of your duties for which no additional payment will be made.**Holiday Entitlement**Holiday entitlement will be pro-rated based on **25 days per annum (increasing to 30 days after 2 years’ continuous service) and 12 public and privilege holidays.***Within your current role, if you have already attained annual leave of 30 days by dint of service with the NI or GB Civil Service, your holiday entitlement will be 30 days from your commencement date (pro-rated).***Probationary Period**There will be a probationary period of 6 months and continued employment will be dependent on the outcome of this probationary review. During the probationary period, your performance will be regularly monitored and the Utility Regulator reserves the right to extend your probationary period for such further period or periods, as it considers reasonably necessary to assess your performance further. **Additional Information**Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by the Utility Regulator and will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form for a **Basic Disclosure Certificate**. Full details will be provided with an offer of employment.Instructions on the process can be accessed from [www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni).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.As an employee of the Utility Regulator, 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. The Utility Regulator must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. Offers of employment will be made on condition of proof of right to work and pre-employment right to work checks will be conducted. You will need to show a prospective employer one of the following documents:* passport
* national identity card or Home Office registration certificate
* UK Border Agency work document if 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 UK illegally. However, to protect themselves against discrimination laws they 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 NI, 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.***The Utility Regulator is an Equal Opportunities Employer. |