



Guide for Applicants

Appointment of 2x Placement Students Utility Regulation 2022/23

Key Dates for Applicants

Closing Date: 2pm on Wednesday 30th March 2022

Interview Date: Week commencing Monday 11th April 2022



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

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1. A Message from John French, Chief Executive

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for taking 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 **Student Placement** 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, incentives 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 permanent HR. Working within the Corporate Affairs directorate you will work proactively within a team-based environment and contribute to the delivery of the UR People Strategy, with a focus on learning and development and providing operational support across a broad generalist HR remit.

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



John French
Chief Executive

2. About Us, Northern Ireland's Utility Regulator

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 100 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

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

3. Role Description

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

During their placement, students 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.

A Role in our Wholesale Team

We are currently recruiting for **one 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.

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
- 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

A Role in our Networks Team

We are currently recruiting for **one placement student** to assist analysts in our Networks directorate in their regulation of the major utility network companies in Northern Ireland, including electricity, gas and water industries.

The role will involve assisting the team in ensuring Network companies deliver for consumers in line with government energy policy including Net Zero.

Tasks may include:

- Contributing to briefings for senior management
- Compilation, quality assurance, analyses and the reporting of data
- 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 video conferencing such as ZOOM, Webex, MS Teams and Jabber
- Using various statistical analysis packages such as PSPP, STATA and/or other econometric packages
- Develop economic knowledge and skills through reading relevant economic publications and attending seminars and conferences
- Assist in the review and quality assurance of business cases and post project evaluations
- 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.

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

Appointment

Candidates will only be appointed if they have successfully completed at least the second year examinations of their degree by end of the 2021/22 academic year.

Those appointed will be employees of the Utility Regulator and will be based at our offices in Queen Street, Belfast. Due to the current restrictions in place because of COVID-19, you may have to work remotely for part of your placement. This is under constant review in line with The Executive guidance.

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

Placements are expected to run August 2022- July 2023.

4. Selection Criteria

Applicants must:

1. 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
2. Be students currently studying for a degree* in an IT or Mathematical related degree;
OR
3. Be students currently studying for a BA/BSc Honours Degree* in Economics, or in a subject where the study of economics is a major component. ('Major component' is defined as: At least 50% of the course covers micro, macro and quantitative economics. Candidates must list all modules and briefly describe their relevant economic modules to allow the panel to determine that their qualification contains 50% of micro, macro and quantitative economics).

The onus is on candidates to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc. so that a well-informed decision can be made.

*Note, the Utility Regulator holds the right to determine the relevance of a degree.

AND have successfully completed at least the second year examinations of their degree by end of the 2021/22 academic year**;

**Note, the Utility Regulator is unable to accept applications from students who will complete their degree in 2022/23.

AND have the opportunity to undertake a 51 week placement for the 2022/23 academic year.

Core competences

You may wish to consider the UR Competency Framework when completing your application. A copy can be downloaded in the recruitment pack.

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) **Quantitative Analysis skills; and**
- (iv) **Awareness of the Northern Ireland regulatory scene and the key features of UK utility regulation.**

5. The Recruitment and Selection Process

How to Apply

Completed application forms must be received by **2.00pm Wednesday 30 March 2022**

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 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.uk

Applications 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 07738390114**

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.

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.

Interview

Following shortlisting, it is intended that the selection process will involve an interview against **the criteria, key skills and competencies** for the role. Additional stages to the selection process may be required. **It is intended that the interview process will take place via MS Teams week commencing 11th April 2022. 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.

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.

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 on your application 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 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 please email recruitment@uregni.gov.uk

Checklist for Applicants

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Application form | <input type="checkbox"/> | Emailed by closing date |
| • Equality Monitoring Form | <input type="checkbox"/> | Emailed in a separate email |

General Information

Completed application forms and other relevant documentation should be returned to recruitment@uregni.gov.uk to arrive no later than **2pm on Wednesday 30 March 2022**.

6. Terms of Appointment

Salary

This is a full time student placement for 51 weeks. The salary is **£17,662** per annum. You will be paid monthly in arrears via Bankers Automated Clearing Service (BACS).

Hours of Work

This is a full-time appointment, however flexible working arrangements will also be actively be considered. Our offices are open for business between the hours of 7am and 7pm Monday – Friday. **Staff may avail of “flexi-time”** provided 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. **All staff are currently working remotely from home and this is subject to Executive guidance on COVID-19 restrictions.**

Holiday Entitlement

Holiday entitlement will be pro-rated based on 25 days per annum and 12 public and privilege holidays.

Place of Work

If appointed, you 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 we 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 to remote working.***

Mobility

Excluding secondment opportunities, employment with the Utility Regulator 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.

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

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.

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 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. 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 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.

The Utility Regulator is an Equal Opportunities and a Disability Confident Employer.