

GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

LEGAL ADVISOR

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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. Message from John French, Chief Executive

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for taking the time to read this Guide for Applicants.

This is an exciting time to join us. We are expanding as an organisation to fully support Northern Ireland in meeting the challenges of climate change, the continued 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 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 them with the highest standards of professionalism. 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.

We are an employer of choice and are committed to staff wellbeing, inclusion and excellence. Recently, we were awarded Best Companies 'Very Good to Work For' status. We have also been successful in gaining the Investors in People Silver Award, the Diversity Mark and Disability Confident: Committed accreditations.

Working within the Chief Executive Office, the Legal Advisor will be involved in assisting the Utility Regulator in the discharge of our 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, competition, company, energy, water and environmental law; and dispute resolution. The post will involve occasional travel within the UK and EU Member States.

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



John French, Chief Executive

2. About the Utility Regulator

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

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

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

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

A dark blue rectangular infographic with a green L-shaped graphic element in the top right corner. It contains text about the organization's mission, vision, and values.

OUR MISSION To protect the short and long-term interests of consumers of electricity, gas and water.	OUR VALUES ACCOUNTABLE: We take ownership of our actions. TRANSPARENT: Ensuring trust through openness and honesty. COLLABORATIVE: Connecting and working with others for a shared purpose.
OUR VISION To ensure value and sustainability in energy and water.	DILIGENT: Working with care and rigour. RESPECTFUL: Treating everyone with dignity and fairness.

Our diversity statement

Be UR Self

We recognise and value that everyone is unique and that we all have different minds. We want to celebrate your difference so that we can harness your unique talent. To that end, we are a diverse and inclusive organisation as we put the 'you are' into 'UR'. Our success is based on the diversity and uniqueness that each of us brings and on the willingness of staff to accept and value one another. This approach helps us protect consumers by making a positive difference to all households and businesses in Northern Ireland.

Equality welcoming statement

Northern Ireland continues to have an under-representation of women across STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) industries, we are proud to support women in STEM. We are an equal opportunity and 'Disability Confident' employer. As people with a disability and people from ethnic minority communities 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: Legal Advisor

Directorate: Chief Executive Office

Line manager: Senior Legal Advisor

Key dates for applicants:

Closing date: **2.00pm, Thursday 6 November 2025**

Assessments and interviews are expected to take place late November 2025.

Terms and conditions

Contract	Permanent, full time. Flexible working arrangements will be considered.
Hours	37 hours per week.
Salary	£47,615 to £ 59,518 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 roles.

Role purpose

Working within the Chief Executive Office, the Legal Advisor will be involved in assisting the Utility Regulator in the discharge of our 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, competition, company, energy water, and 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, including: 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 Affairs Department. For example, you will also be involved in managing and working with the Utility Regulator's external legal panel.

You will be required to perform such duties as are commensurate with this role and to undertake any other manager level duties as may reasonably be required.

Key responsibilities

Your main responsibilities are set out below.

- Provide input to the forward work planning and activities of the Legal Affairs Department.
- Assist the Head of Legal in reviewing the Legal Affairs Department strategy.
- Assist the Head of Legal in providing expert legal advice as required on areas of strategic importance to the Utility Regulator.
- 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.
- Draft licence modifications, legal letters, legislative interpretation advices and providing verbal briefings as and when required on a wide range of areas of law.
- Take 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).
- Support the Legal Affairs Department and identify, report and suggest solutions to legal risks.
- Assist the Legal Affairs Department with any litigation cases brought before the NI and/or RoI courts.
- Assist with the Utility Regulator's enforcement role and advising on its powers and duties.
- To provide legal support on specific projects such as the Single Electricity Market.
- Provide advice to those dealing with regulatory appeals, complaints and disputes.
- Assist in the co-ordination and response to Freedom of Information requests and other policy matters.

- Assist in the training and development of Utility Regulator staff as appropriate.
- Assist in the adherence to the expenditure of the Legal Affairs 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.
- Assist the Legal Affairs Department in ensuring a consistent approach from a legal perspective in relation to internal policies and procedures.
- Assist in developing the standing and reputation of the Legal Affairs Department as a centre of excellence both within the Utility Regulator and with stakeholders, external agencies and service providers.
- Maintain a good understanding of the principles and practices within the organisation and the utilities industry.
- 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 Affairs Department (e.g. in relation to stress management).
- Input to the Chief Executive Office's Risk Register as required.
- Contribute to the identification of legal risks and strategic risks for the Chief Executive Office and wider organisation.
- Respond to external queries and consultations as appropriate.
- To contribute to the promotion of equality of opportunity within the Utility Regulator and in the performance of your duties.
- To contribute to the Legal Affairs Department's equality screening duties where appropriate and in line with Section 75 duties.
- 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.

- 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.

This list is not exhaustive and will change over time according to organisational need. The postholder will be required to carry out other duties as allocated by management.

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

4. Selection criteria

Please note that you will be required to demonstrate fully the following essential criteria **1-3 on the application form** to be shortlisted for the next stage of the process.

Essential criteria **3 - 6** will be tested at the **interview and assessment** stages.

Essential criteria - application form	
1	A qualified solicitor or barrister, qualified to practice in NI or England and Wales with post qualification experience. The individual must hold a valid practicing certificate issued by the appropriate regulatory authority or will hold one at the date of appointment.
2	Proven experience gained working in energy/regulatory law; and/or public/administrative law. Equivalent experience in adjacent legal fields with demonstrable relevance to the role will also be considered.
3	Proven ability to analyse complex legal issues and provide clear and concise advice and solutions that resolve business problems.
Essential criteria - interview/assessment	
3	Proven ability to analyse complex legal issues and provide clear and concise advice and solutions that resolve business problems.
4	Proven ability to manage significant workloads with limited resources and deliver outputs in line with client/customer expectations and deadlines.
5	Proven ability to build and maintain productive communication networks with colleagues and stakeholder organisations.
6	Ability to positively demonstrate by examples, an understanding of and commitment to further workplace values that align to those of the Utility Regulator. (Our mission, vision and values can be found on page 4 of this pack).

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 United Kingdom counterpart. You will be required to present original certificates/documentation if you are invited to the next stage of the selection process.

Desirable criteria

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

Desirable criteria - application form	
1	Three years post qualification experience in a relevant legal area.
2	Knowledge or experience of European Union law or commercial law.

In addition to satisfying the above essential criteria, applicants will be expected to display the following competencies and skills at interview and assessment stages.

Key skills and competencies	
Professional knowledge/skills	Excellent legal drafting skills and attention to detail. Good knowledge of technical law and the ability to assimilate complex technical information. Excellent communication skills. Strong organisational and planning skills. Ability to work under pressure and committed to delivering on deadlines. Ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and external stakeholder organisations. Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and external stakeholder as part of a wider team.
Analytical rigour	High level of attention to detail and accuracy. Ability to use complex analysis to resolve problems. Ability to make sound judgements, taking into account all relevant legal, financial and economic factors.
Governance	Ability to apply best practice and work within policy and governance. High level of attention to detail and accuracy. Ability use analysis to resolve problems.
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.
Relationship management	Ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and external stakeholder organisations.
Strategic thinking and 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.
Managing resources	Ability to balance competing demands effectively. Work well under pressure and committed to delivering on 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, Thursday 6 November 2025**.

Please submit your application by email, in MS Word format. A typed or scanned signature will be accepted. Please submit your completed Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form in a separate email labelled clearly 'Monitoring Form' in the subject line.

The onus is on you to ensure your application is received before the closing date. We will use the time it is received according to our computer systems, not the time sent from your email account.

Applications and queries must be emailed to recruitment@uregni.gov.uk.

If you have a disability and require assistance, we will facilitate this on request. If you wish to receive this information pack in an accessible format, please advise of your requirements as soon as possible as the closing date is the same for all applicants.

Monitoring Form

We monitor applications for employment in terms of community background, sex, disability and race. You should note that this information is regarded as part of your application and failure fully to complete and return it will result in disqualification.

The use and confidentiality of community background information is protected by the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. It will be used only for monitoring, investigations or proceedings under the requirements of the above legislation.

We are committed to equality of opportunity and welcome applications from all suitably qualified applicants irrespective of age, sexual orientation, marital status/civil partnership, dependants, religious belief, political opinion, gender reassignment, race, sex or disability.

Job applicant's privacy notice

We are the data controller for the personal information you provide as an individual seeking employment. This means we determine the purposes for which, and the manner in which, any personal information relating to your application and the recruitment procedure generally is processed. We are required under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to notify you of

the information contained in our Job Applicant's Privacy Notice. This notice describes how we collect and use personal information during the recruitment process and afterwards in accordance with GDPR and can be downloaded, in full, from www.uregni.gov.uk/publications/gdpr-privacy-notices.

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, desirable criteria or key skills.

Additional selection stages may be needed. We intend that the interview process will take place in Millennium House, Great Victoria Street, 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

Key employee benefits

These headline terms will be included (amongst others) in a written contract of employment.

Your salary

The starting base salary will be in the range of £47,615 to £ 59,518 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 34.25%. This is a generous, defined benefit pension scheme. Information about pensions can be found at www.finance-ni.gov.uk/topics/working-northern-ireland-civil-service/civil-service-pensions-ni

Your holiday entitlement

Holiday entitlement will be pro-rated based on 25 days per annum (increasing to 30 days after two years continuous service) and 12 public and privilege holidays. If, in your current role, you have already attained 30 days leave by dint of service with the Northern Ireland or Great Britain Civil Service, your entitlement will be 30 days from your start date (pro-rated).

Non-salary benefits

We offer a range of non-salary benefits including a supportive family friendly environment, flexible working in a hybrid setting, generous leave including special leave, maternity/paternity entitlement, wellbeing and employee programme (Inspire), supported learning and development, Cycle to Work Scheme, season ticket loan, payroll giving, volunteering opportunities and a culture that supports diversity and inclusion.

Hours of work

This is a full-time appointment, however, flexible working arrangements will be considered. Our offices are open for business between 7am and 7pm (Monday to Friday). 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 Millennium House, Great Victoria Street, Belfast. We operate a hybrid working pattern, which is an average of 40% of all staff working hours to be in person with colleagues, either on-site at Millennium House or on official business. This hybrid working pattern is subject to business need. The home working element of hybrid working is voluntary and while you may opt to be office based, we welcome applicants whose circumstances lend themselves to a degree of remote working.

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 Access NI application form for a basic disclosure certificate. Full details will be provided with an offer of employment. Instructions can be found at www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni.

You should not be put off applying because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner and information relating to convictions is destroyed after a decision is made. Criminal record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

As a Utility Regulator employee, you will be subject to various office policies, for example, rules on shareholdings, conflicts of interest and future appointments.

Proof of right to work in the UK and visa conditions

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

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

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

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

If your right to work in the United Kingdom is based on a visa or work permit, any future offer of employment is conditional upon:

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

For further support on working in Northern Ireland, please visit www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/working-northern-ireland or www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/what-you-need-to-do

Please note that, if your application is shortlisted for interview, you will be asked to provide one of the above documents. Should you fail to do so, you may not be eligible to proceed. The successful candidate will be required to produce the same document in its original format before commencing employment.