

Applying for a job – advice on making an application

It is not possible to interview everyone who applies for a job. Your application form is the only means we have to judge your capability and potential and the information in it will be used to draw up a shortlist for the next stage of selection.

With the application form is a job description and person specification.

The job description lists the main duties and responsibilities for the post.

The person specification sets out the experience, skills, abilities and qualifications required to do the job. These requirements are split into two categories:

1. Essential criteria – are characteristics that are seen as essential to the job. A candidate that does not have these will not be able to carry out the job and will not be shortlisted for interview.
2. Desirable criteria – these may be used to choose between two or more good candidates.

Your application will be assessed against the criteria listed on the person specification.

General points

You are able to save your application and make amendments before submitting it. This helps to avoid making mistakes and allows you to organise your application.

Please note that if you are copying and pasting from a Word document into your online application, you may lose any formatting you have done. You may wish to consider formatting your text once it has been pasted into your application. This includes things like bullet points, underlining etc.

CVs alone are only acceptable for specific jobs. This will be clear when you are applying, as cv's are acceptable for Senior Management roles only.

Make sure your application relates to the person specification for the specific job that you are applying for. When you have finished your application re-read it and check for any errors or omissions. Make sure your application form is submitted by the closing date.

A copy of your application will be held in your 'My Account area'.

Education and qualifications

List the qualifications you possess including grades. There is no need to list failed exams. The person specification will say if the job requires any particular qualifications. If you are the preferred candidate we will need to see evidence of essential qualifications. (Please note this does not mean we need to see all your qualifications.)

Training and memberships

List any formal, informal, or on the job training you have received. Selection will be based on the education and training listed in the person specification.

Current or most recent employment

Please state your employer's name, address and telephone number in full. Do not go into too much detail, but list the main activities of the job.

Previous employment

Please account for all time since you left school, college or university. List your jobs, with the most recent first, stating month and year and mentioning any gaps in employment. Check that dates are correct and in the right order. Include voluntary work particularly if there have been times when you have not been in paid work.

Supporting statement

This is your opportunity to tell us why you are suitable for the job. Read the job description and person specification carefully to see what skills and experience you have that relate to those required by the job. Think about examples you can give to provide evidence of this.

Consider what you have done in the past: at home; at school; at college, in paid work; unpaid work; or in a hobby. These may be useful to show how you meet the person specification. For example running a home can show skills such as organising or budgeting, being active in a club or other groups can show teamwork, communication or organising skills.

Ensure that this section is written in a well-organised way and is relevant to the job for which you are applying. Write in a positive manner such as 'I was responsible for....' or 'I organised....' It is useful to deal with each point of the person specification in turn. This will help you to structure your statement clearly.

References

No offer of appointment will be made until references, that are satisfactory to the Council, are received. Referees must be able to produce information about your suitability for the post.

You will need to provide the names of two referees. One should be your most recent employer and the second a previous employer or someone who can give information relevant to the job. If the job is within Regulated Services a verification is undertaken on references.

If you are a school or college leaver please give the name of your Head Teacher or Tutor.

References provided by relatives, friends or people with whom you live are not acceptable. Use someone who knows your capabilities and is aware of your potential. Testimonies, affidavits and references addressed 'To whom it may concern' are not acceptable.

If you have been self-employed, or employed by an organisation that has ceased trading, give the name of an official such as an Accountant or Bank Manager who can vouch for that period.

References will only be taken up if you are the preferred candidate for the post you are applying for.

It is advisable for you to contact your referees at an early stage to let them know that you wish to give their name and ensure that they are willing to act as a referee.

Other details

Criminal convictions

If the job for which you are applying involves working with children or vulnerable adults, it will be exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974 and subject to a disclosure in accordance with the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service and the Police Act 1997.

The Council is committed to preventing discrimination or any unfair treatment against any employees, potential employees or voluntary workers on the grounds of offending behaviour that does not create risk to children or vulnerable adults; or adversely affect the interests of the Council in sensitive occupational areas.

The Council complies with the DBS Code of Practice, which is available on request.

If you are the preferred candidate for one of these occupational areas, you will be required to declare any convictions or cautions you may have, even if they would otherwise be regarded as 'spent' under this Act and any cautions or bind-overs. The information will be treated in confidence and will only be taken into account in relation to an application where the exemption applies.

The disclosure of a criminal record or other information will not debar you from a job unless the Council considers that the conviction makes you unsuitable for appointment. In making this decision the Council will consider the nature of the offence, how long ago and what age you were when it was committed as well as any other factors which may be relevant.

Failure to declare a conviction, caution or bind-over may, however, disqualify you from appointment, or result in summary dismissal if the discrepancy comes to light.

For other jobs not in these areas, the Council may ask a question relating to 'unspent' convictions (in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act) This would be asked of the preferred candidate only. If this applies this would be in the conditional offer of employment e-mail. The same principle applies – the disclosure of a criminal record will not debar you from a job unless the Council considers that the conviction makes you unsuitable for appointment. In making this decision the Council will consider the nature of the offence, how long ago and what age you were when it was committed as well as any other factors which may be relevant.

Declaration of possible conflict of interest

Please give details of any other current employment you have. Also, please give details of any interests that you, your partner or a close relative has in a private enterprise. This is to ensure that there is no conflict of interest that could affect your employment with the Council. Just a few examples which could be considered in conflict are:

- a job that involves referring elderly persons for accommodation when a partner runs a care home.
- a job that involves tendering for work when a close relative runs a business that could benefit.
- if you or a partner has an association with an organisation that receives a grant from the Council and the job involves monitoring or issuing grants.

Eligibility to work in the UK

Before you are employed, an employer must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the UK. You must state on the form whether or not you are currently eligible to work in the UK and, if there are any time restrictions on this, when eligibility expires.

Ability to travel between locations

Some jobs require you to be able to travel between locations. This does not necessarily mean use of a car; the actual mode of transport can vary depending on the distance to be travelled.

Other jobs may specify that driving is essential. In these circumstances you will be asked to provide your current driving licence if you are the preferred candidate.

Relationship

We need to know if you are related to a Councillor or an employee of the Council. This is to ensure that you are neither disadvantaged nor favoured in your application. You must not canvass either a Councillor or Council employee to gain employment. This will disqualify your application.

Flexible working

Flexible working arrangements can include part time or term time working, job sharing (where the duties and responsibilities of a full-time job are shared), or compressed working hours or hours arranged in a pattern that varies from the standard five day working pattern. The job advert will let you know the hours for the job if they are less than full-time or if a particular working pattern is needed.

If you wish to apply for a flexible working arrangement, you should indicate this on your application form. The Recruiting Manager will consider whether you are suitable for the job first and will then discuss with you whether flexible working arrangements can be applied.

Disability

If you have declared a disability on your application and you meet the essential criteria for the job, as listed in the person specification, you will be guaranteed an interview. This does not guarantee you the job. At interview you will be assessed along with all the other candidates. You do not have to declare a disability, but we can only guarantee an interview (subject to you meeting the essential criteria for the job) if you tell us.

If you are shortlisted for interview and/or assessment, please use the Contact Form to let the Recruiting Manager know if you need any special assistance at interview, for example if you have difficulty in moving up or down stairs or have hearing or speech difficulties.

Declaration

Please read your completed application carefully and check for any errors or omissions. False declaration or omission in support of your application will disqualify you from appointment. If you are appointed, and false declarations or omissions are subsequently discovered, this may lead to disciplinary or legal action against you.

Equal opportunities monitoring

All stages of the recruitment process are monitored. We ask you to help us in this monitoring by completing the recruitment monitoring form. The people involved in the selection process will not see it.

What happens next?

Your completed application form will be used to decide whether or not you progress to the next stage of the selection process. No assumptions will be made about your experience. It is vital that you have told us how you meet the selection criteria.

If you do not receive an invitation for interview by the date specified in the advertisement you can assume that your application has not been successful. If you would like feedback on the reasons why you have not been shortlisted, please contact the Recruiting Manager using the Contact Form.

If you are not successful in your application, please do not be discouraged from applying for other jobs with the Council. Your skills and experience may be more suitable to another vacancy.