

Help and support for candidates

Information Point 1

Writing a great application form

We want you to submit the best possible application by ensuring you provide us with the information we need to assess your suitability for the role. It is the information you provide in the application form that will be used to determine whether or not we invite you to the next stage of selection process.

A few basic do's and do not's for your application

DO

- Read the Role Profile and any other documentation relating to the role before completing the application form
- Check that you meet all of the essential criteria for the role. You need to demonstrate that you meet all of these to be shortlisted for the next stage of the selection process
- Complete the form fully (refer to the online application user guide for further clarification about what information you need to submit)
- Check your spelling and grammar and ensure your application is clear, concise and easy to read
- Make sure all the information you submit is accurate

DO NOT

- Include information irrelevant to the role. Stay focussed on the criteria we are looking for
- Copy and paste sections of old applications that you have made, or a CV. Instead, tailor your application for the specific job you are applying for
- Use 'text speak', and be careful not to assume that the selection panel will understand abbreviations

Writing a supporting statement

The supporting statement is one of the most important sections of the application form. It is where you can sell your skills and experience and demonstrate that you meet the requirements of the role.

Once we have your application, we will assess it against the essential and desirable criteria listed in the role profile. These are the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours that are needed to carry out the job. You need to provide evidence by giving

specific examples that you possess each of these. So make sure you explain what you did and why, and what the outcome was as a result of your actions.

For example if the role profile requires 'effective team working' it is not sufficient to say that you 'had experience of working in different teams'; this does not demonstrate your competency. Instead you should provide evidence of what you did within a team. So:

- What was your role?
- How did you work with others in the team?
- How did you ensure the team delivered what it was supposed to?
- Did you suggest any improvements?
- And if so, what were they, why did you suggest them and what was the outcome?
- Also include details of any feedback you received from a customer or colleague.

You may find it useful to think of the following acronym: 'Context, Action, Result' = CAR

- C = context - briefly describe the situation
- A = action - state your role, what you did, why you did it and how you did it
- R = result - describe what the outcome was, and how this was evidenced

Where you are giving examples, try to make them current, but remember that they do not just have to be from your current or most recent employment. Give some thought to your previous work experience or other responsibilities outside of paid employment, such as any community, voluntary or leisure activity you have been involved in. If you have been out of paid employment for a long time, or have never been employed before, your job history may be less important than some of the responsibilities and experience which you have had more recently. For example, you may have considerable domestic responsibilities; organise social or community activities or help out at a local school in your spare time.

Make sure that the examples you give demonstrate your personal involvement. You should use 'I', not 'we' so that we can understand what you were personally responsible for doing. 'We' often gives the impression that you did not personally undertake the duties, or that you were somehow involved but didn't really have ownership or responsibility for the situation.

This is your chance to sell and promote yourself. Be honest and don't exaggerate, but make the most of this section and show us how you meet the criteria. There will probably be lots of other people applying for the role, so try and demonstrate why you should be shortlisted for the next stage.