

Guidance Notes To Completing Application

Introduction

Sefton Council is committed to equality in recruitment, selection and during the course of employment and positively welcomes applications from all sectors of the community. The purpose of this Guidance is to give those interested in working for the Council assistance in completing the Application Form, information on the recruitment, selection and appointment process, and to support fairness in access to work.

Guidance

Your Application Form plays an important part in all stages of the selection process: it is used to determine whether or not you will be shortlisted for interview and acts as a basis for the interview itself. Some important points to bear in mind before you complete the form:

- Study the Job Description and Person Specification and Job Analysis (JA1) as they list the qualifications, skills, knowledge, and experience required to do the job.
- Review your own skills, knowledge and experience.
- Ask yourself if you possess the essential attributes and whether you can meet the mental and physical demands of the job before investing time and effort in completing the form.
- Prepare a rough draft before filling in the form, this helps to clarify your ideas, structure your response and avoid mistakes.
- Please complete the form; do not send a CV instead, as it will **not** be accepted.
- Keep a copy of the advertisement for future reference, it provides useful information about the job and other details such as closing date, return address etc.

Completing the Form

Section 1

Fill in the job title, vacancy ref. no., section, establishment and department on the form.

Section 2

Make sure that your personal details are legibly written. If you would prefer correspondence to be sent to you by e-mail please give your address. If this is possible then the Authority may correspond with you in this way.

If you are applying for a post that involves driving you should complete the specific details required on the form relating to your driving licence.

In some circumstances the Authority may offer support to candidates who are enrolled on Government Employment Initiatives. If you are part of a government scheme you should let the Authority know so that you can access any additional help available.

Section 3

Specify details of all formal and informal qualifications and training that you have obtained, and that are required or appropriate for the job. Please do not use abbreviations; specify the full title of the qualification.

You should also include training that you have acquired as part of a government employment/training scheme **or from activities undertaken outside of work if it is relevant.**

Section 4

Work Experience gained as part of a Government Initiative should also be included in this section.

Section 5

This is the most important part of your Application Form. It is your opportunity to demonstrate, using examples, how your skills knowledge and experience meet the requirements of the post. Include **relevant** aspects and achievements in your career history rather than repeating it all. **Aim to be concise.**

You should also include work experience gained from government employment initiatives.

If you have never been in paid employment you should draw on your skills, knowledge and experience gained from other aspects of your life such as community or voluntary work, leisure, school or other responsibilities such as bringing up a family.

Section 6

We need to establish that you would be able to attend work regularly. These details will be checked with your current or most recent employer, where appropriate.

Section 7

Whilst the Authority supports the rehabilitation of ex-offenders it is obliged under certain care/safeguarding legislation and an Exemption Order to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 to ensure safe recruitment to posts where working with children, vulnerable adults or other positions of trust are involved. These are referred to as Regulated Posts. The job description will indicate under "Special Conditions" if the post you are applying for is Regulated and falls within this legislation. In the first instance, you are required to indicate whether you have any spent convictions on the Application Form. In addition to that the Authority can, for certain posts, also take in to account other unacceptable behaviour when considering employability. However, this will only be examined if an offer of employment is made. All successful applicants to Regulated Posts will, in any event, be subject to a criminal history check via the Criminal Records Bureau.

Applicants should be aware that having a conviction or a record of some other type of unacceptable behaviour **would not** necessarily bar you from employment in Regulated Posts as any decision to employ will be considered on the individual circumstances of each case.

Section 8

In order to support the selection decision two references are sought for shortlisted applicants. You are, therefore, asked to provide the names and addresses of two referees, one of who must be your most recent employer. (You must not use a member of the interview panel as a referee.) If you have never worked you should identify two referees who are able to tell us about your skills, knowledge and abilities, e.g. Headteacher, Voluntary Organiser, etc.

Section 10

The Data Protection Acts 1998 states that Data Controllers, such as the Council, must fairly and lawfully obtain personal data. Once obtained the Council must only process that information within the confines of the Data Protection Act. This means that it can only be retained, amended or disclosed for the purposes for which it was obtained. Applicants are, therefore, asked to sign to indicate that they understand and consent to this.

Application by Internet

Job application forms are available in a word format. You can save the word job application form to your own area for completion. You can do this by selecting File,

Save As, from the menu bar. Please prepare your application with care making sure that page breaks are inserted appropriately. Please answer the questions with a, Y(es) or N(o) as requested.

As your application is photocopied and distributed to the selection and interview panel, we recommend that you prepare your application using Ariel font, size 12. You may return your completed form by e-mail if an e-mail address has been given with the specific vacancy or print out the form and return it to the address given. Should you be invited for interview, you will need to produce a signed version of your application.

Addressing Equality

As mentioned earlier the Council is committed to achieving equality and will make reasonable adjustment for those covered by appropriate legislation i.e. Race Relations, Sex Discrimination, Disabled Persons', Rehabilitation Of Offenders Acts etc in order that all groups in society may have access to employment opportunities within the Council. In pursuit of this, the Council will, during the recruitment and selection process, ensure that such applicants are not disadvantaged i.e. accept audiotape applications, respect religious or cultural beliefs, support, where legal, the rehabilitation of offenders etc.

In order to comply with this it is important that you notify the Council if you are covered by the legislation i.e. have a disability, language difficulty etc. when requesting or submitting your Application Form. It would also be helpful for you to advise, if you already know, of the type of adjustment/aid you might require for the interview and subsequent employment. If you are invited for interview this will be discussed with you further.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

Applicants for posts within the Council are asked to complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form. Its purpose is to provide essential information to enable the Council to see the make-up of the candidates that are attracted to its posts and to form future policy. The information is also provided to the Government, by statistical return, for the same purpose. The Form is separated from your Application on receipt and the information plays no part in the selection process. Your assistance in providing the information is very much appreciated.

Preparation for Interview

Why put all that hard work into completing an Application Form only to fail at interview? The essential ingredients for a successful interview are to research the post and be aware of how you can be of benefit to the organisation. If you are invited to attend for interview spend some time reviewing your skills, knowledge and experience - **PREPARE FOR YOUR INTERVIEW!**

Assessment Methods

As part of the selection process for posts the Authority may choose to use assessment exercises as well as interview candidates. The exercises will be relevant and appropriate to the post in question and all shortlisted candidates for the post will sit the same tests. The purpose of using additional assessment methods is so that more information can be obtained about the abilities of each candidate. It also offers candidates the opportunity to display their skills in a wider variety of ways than at an interview alone. The range of exercises may include Psychometric Tests and work related exercises such as presentations, in-tray exercises etc. In these situations further guidance will be given to all candidates

Offer of Employment

Applicants should be aware that if they are successful in gaining employment with the Council then the offer of employment will be subject to medical clearance and proof of the ability to work in this country i.e. National Insurance Number or work permit, as a minimum. Other conditions of employment may include satisfactory references, if not already sought, and depending on the type of work, a valid driving licence, proof of qualifications or satisfactory Disclosure. Applicants for posts requiring Disclosure will need proof of identification and will have to attend a meeting to complete an Application Form or Disclosure to the Criminal Records Bureau. The offer letter will indicate what conditions apply and if appropriate any other arrangements.

Complaints Procedure

The Authority has a recruitment and selection complaints procedure, which can be used to make a complaint for non-selection for interview, offer of employment or the way in which the process was handled. If you would like to make a complaint you may do so by writing to the Personnel Director, Sefton Metropolitan Council, 1st Floor, Merton House, Stanley Road, Bootle, L20 3DL. When writing you must provide details of your complaint, the job, department and the Manager responsible for the recruitment, if known.

If you have a query regarding the post that you are applying for you should contact the **Department which placed the advertisement**. However, if you need assistance in completing your Application Form, advice on whether you are covered by legislation or on the recruitment and selection procedure then you should contact the Personnel Department on Tel no. 0151 934 3379.

Finally, the Council would like to wish you good luck with your application.