

Information to Candidates

Thank you for applying for a job with us. If you haven't already been provided with an Applicant Reference Number this will be added to your form once it is returned to us.

This information is to help you to understand how our recruitment process works and how to best fill in your application form.

About the information you have received

A Job Description: Outlines the purpose of the job and the main duties involved.

A Person Specification: Lists the essential criteria an applicant needs to meet. It is this document that applicants are measured against during recruitment.

An Application Form: A standard form on which we collect information about you. We use this, instead of a C.V., to be more consistent.

Other information: You may have received other specific information about the job, and the stages of your recruitment process.

How our recruitment process works

A selection panel is formed, made up of at least two people, usually including the Headteacher or members of the Governing Body. Next, they agree the content of the Job Description and the essential criteria for the Person Specification. A job advert is then written.

When we receive application forms we separate Part A, Part B and Part C. The Equal Opportunities Monitoring information is collected from Part A and Part C is used to check for convictions and will not be available during shortlisting but will be given to the interview panel if you are shortlisted. Only Part B is given to the shortlisting panel. This panel does not see personal information about you. This is designed to reduce the chances of unfair discrimination. If you do not submit all three parts of the application form you will not be able to be considered for the position.

Each panel member then compares the information on Part B of your Application Form with the criteria on the Person Specification. They each read all of the forms and then record their views. Next they discuss and agree who will go through to the next stage. If there are a lot of applicants who meet the requirements, the panel will consider the successful pile again, keeping only those who best meet the requirements. References are then requested from referees you have provided in advance of the interview and may be referred to during the interview in line with Safer Recruitment practices.

Shortlisted applicants may then have an interview or may be asked to take part in other selection activities, e.g. work tests, occupational tests etc. You will always be told about these activities in advance.

What do we value on Application Forms?

We are only looking for the things we have listed on the Person Specification.

Qualifications or Experience?

We strongly value the achievement of, and progress towards, academic, professional and vocational qualifications.

We also believe, however, that there are extremely talented people in the jobs market. People who, for one reason or another, have not developed their skills and abilities through an academic route and gained a qualification. So we also value other things such as previous job experience, research projects or personal study, work placements, voluntary work, social experience or personal life experience. Obviously for some jobs in the Council, a professional qualification is essential. In this case we will ask for the relevant qualification, (e.g. a teacher must have a nationally recognised Teaching Qualification). You will be asked to provide certificates to verify your qualification.

How to best fill in your Application form

The panel are looking for those candidates who can give real examples of how they meet the essential criteria on the Person Specification. It is quality, not quantity that is important.

Do not enclose a C.V., we only want information on the application form. C.V.'s will not be considered.

Here are some helpful hints when completing the form, and remember to have the Person Specification at hand throughout:

- Use a spare sheet of paper to make notes first.
- Prepare answers to all questions but leave the 'How you meet the essential requirements' until last. Most candidates find this the hardest part to complete.
- If a box is not relevant to your personal circumstances, mark it 'not applicable'.
- Give details of your employment history. If you have a gap in your employment, you are required to give an explanation for this.
- Give details of any referees who we can ask for information about you. (We only ask for factual information, not that person's opinion about you). If you are employed, include details of your current employer. If you are unemployed, you must give details of a previous employer. If you have never been employed, please give details of a school, college or university tutor, or put a line through the box.

Now focus on the 'How you meet the essential requirements'. Take each of the criteria on the Person Specification in turn. Take time to think about all of your previous experience and give examples of where you have best displayed the things that are asked for. Simply stating that you have each requirement will not be considered as suitable evidence and may disadvantage you at the short-listing stage. Remember you can use examples from your work life, study, personal life, voluntary work, social experience, vocational training etc. Why not ask your friends or colleagues about times when you have used these skills.

Answer the points in the same order as on the Person Specification. You can present this as a list and use numbering if you wish. Remember – Quality over Quantity.

How we acknowledge receipt of your Application Form

We do not write back to every candidate who submits an Application Form to us.

The information pack will outline how and when you will be informed.

We will give you a Fair and Equal Opportunity to work for Sunderland City Council

We are fully committed to providing a fair recruitment process for all. To do this, we need to know if you feel anything may prevent you from demonstrating your full potential. We will make any reasonable adjustment or arrangement to any part of the recruitment process.

Access to Employment for Disabled People

We are committed to equal opportunity in employment for disabled people. This means that we will not unfairly discriminate against a candidate with a disability, or an employee that becomes disabled whilst working for us.

Complaints about the Recruitment Process

If you feel you have been treated unfairly, or are unhappy with any part of the recruitment process, we want to know about it! You can make a complaint by contacting the relevant service, and explain that you wish to make a complaint. Please see your Application Pack for contact details.

Data Protection

The information you provide on the application form will be used to assess your suitability for the post, and will be viewed only by those involved in the recruitment process. If you are appointed, the information will be used to create your employment record. If you are not appointed, it will be destroyed after 6 months, except in the event of a dispute.

Personal information that you provide in the 'Equal Opportunities Monitoring' section of the form will only be used for the purpose of equal opportunities monitoring and statistical analysis. This helps us to continually improve our equal opportunities policies and practices.

By submitting this form, you are consenting to the recording and use of the information for the purposes mentioned above.

Any other questions

If you have any questions or comments about any aspect of the recruitment process, please contact the headteacher of the school as directed by the appropriate advertisement/information in your application pack. Alternatively, please feel free to contact Recruitment Services on 0191 561 1756 or email IJM@sunderland.gov.uk.