

London Borough of Sutton

Guidance for Applicants



If you need this guidance in another format, please contact the office that sent it to you.

The application form

We use what you tell us on the application form to help us decide who to interview. Please take your time, and fill it in fully. We enclose a person specification with this application form. This is a list of the skills, knowledge and experience or qualifications which the job needs. When we read your application form we look for evidence to show that you have these. It is important that you give us enough detail, and examples of what you have done, to show that you do have them. Take time over this, and include all the relevant information.

Please write in black pen, or type. Use extra sheets if you need to.

Personal details

As well as your full names, please write the title you would like us to use. Examples are Ms; Miss; Mrs; Mr.

Education, qualifications and training

The person specification may ask for specific qualifications or training. List the relevant qualifications or courses you have done.

Work Experience

Your work history may include periods of unpaid and voluntary work as well as paid, employment. For example you may include time as a carer for one of your family, or being a voluntary helper in a school.

Use another sheet if you need extra space.

Previous employers

List in this section **all** previous employers you have had, from when you started work until now. If you have not worked before, for instance you are just leaving school, write this clearly in the box.

Breaks in employment history

If there are gaps in dates in the 'Previous employers' section, please explain why.

Referees

We do not use references as part of selection itself however they can be requested prior to interview. We approach your referees to confirm what you have told us. For example, if you tell us that you have worked in your present job for three years as a care assistant, we would expect your referees to tell us the same.

Choose referees who know you well enough to comment on your skills for the job you are applying for. For each referee please say how you know the person. For example, is the person your manager, or were they your manager in a previous job? Please don't give close friends or family members as referees.

Relationships

We do not exclude people who are related to councillors, staff, or school governors, but if you are related to someone we will make sure that they do not take part in the selection for this post. If we find out after appointing you that you are related to someone who interviewed you we may dismiss you. 'Related' includes cohabiting with someone.

Statement of suitability

This section is your opportunity to show us that you meet the person specification. Take each item on the person specification and give details of your knowledge and experience. Give specific examples of what you have done which prove your ability. If the person specification says 'Able to organise self and others to complete projects within deadlines' you must do more than say: 'I am an organised person and can work to deadlines'. Give an example by describing something that you have done which shows your organisational skills. Here is an example: 'I organised a fund-raising event for the local playgroup within six months and with a group of 5 helpers'.

The people reading your application cannot assume that because you have experience you also have the ability to carry out a task. You may have experience of managing staff for example but we need to know how you did this. You need to tell us how you managed performance and how you motivated your staff, for example.

We don't always expect you to have formal experience. We are happy for you to use examples from voluntary work, or from your hobbies and interests. If you can show that you have the ability to do the tasks, that will be equally acceptable. For example, to organise a meeting you need to be able to: liaise with others, book accommodation, organise refreshments and compile agendas.

Again, please use another sheet if you need to.

Equal opportunities

We check our recruitment and selection to make sure that we are not unfairly discriminating against certain groups. To help us do this we ask you details about your gender, ethnic origin and whether you have a disability. The selection panel does not see this section of your form. We collect this information electronically, using scanning equipment, and for this we do not record your name. You cannot be identified after we have collected our statistics.

Disabled people

If you are disabled please tell us on your application form what access arrangements, adaptations or adjustments would help you to carry out the job. This will help us assess you equally with other applicants. As part of our equal opportunities policy we shortlist any disabled applicant who meets the criteria. For this reason we do tell the selection panel if any applicants are disabled.

Date of birth

We ask for your date of birth because if we offer you the job we need to know this. However, it is on the removable part of the form and we **do not** use it as part of selection. Please be aware, however, that the Council's normal retirement age is 65.

Eligibility to Work

We need to make sure that everyone we employ is entitled to work in the United Kingdom. If you are resident in the UK, you should have a National Insurance number. This is proof enough of your eligibility to work. You may have a permit to work in the UK, which you would need to produce before your employment with Sutton could be confirmed. If there are any restrictions on how long you are entitled to work, please make sure you tell us when you apply for the job. This will not necessarily be a bar to your employment with us, but we must know in advance.

Criminal convictions, rehabilitation of offenders and police checks

As this job involves access to children it is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which means you must give us details of any criminal convictions you have had, **spent or unspent**.

We can ask the police to check whether you have a criminal record, and if so for what offences. We only carry out the enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check if you are offered the job. However, we will ask you to complete a CRB form and supply the necessary evidence at interview.

In **all** cases we treat the information you give us as confidential, and look at it in relation to the job you have applied for before making a decision. The application form we send you asks for information based on the rules affecting the job for which you are applying.

Data Protection

Please note that the information you give on your application form will be held and processed by the London Borough of Sutton, under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Other Information

We will not judge you on your writing ability or your handwriting. If these skills are necessary for the job we will assess them separately.

You may have already prepared a CV and want to send that instead of answering the statement of suitability. You may send it, but you must also complete the statement of suitability. A CV does not usually describe your skills and abilities fully. It is unlikely the shortlister will be able to find enough evidence in a CV alone.

Interviews

Sutton uses several selection methods to assess whether people meet the job criteria. We may ask you to take an ability test, do a presentation or other work-related exercise. We will tell you before the interviews what methods we are using for this post. At the interview we will ask you questions related to the person specification.

Job Offers

If we offer you the job, it will be subject to a satisfactory enhanced CRB check, references and health clearance. If your referees do not confirm what you have told us we may want to discuss this with you. We will also ask to see evidence of your qualifications if they are essential for the job.

We will ask you to complete a health questionnaire which we will send to our occupational health department. It is their job to make sure that you are fit to do the job we have offered you. We may ask you to have a medical examination.

Right to work

We will not appoint you until we have seen evidence – usually your national insurance number or a current work permit – that you are eligible to work in this country.

Complaints

The Council wants to ensure equality of opportunity in its recruitment and selection. If you think that you have been discriminated against during the selection process because of your race, gender, marital status or sexual orientation, or because you have a disability, you may complain and we will look into your complaint. You must phone the Director of the department within 72 hours of being rejected after an interview. You must explain why you want to complain to the Director or his/her representative. You must also put your complaint in writing. The Director or his/her representative may want to talk to you and later will confirm the outcome of the investigation.

To complain about the recruitment and selection process in schools you should write to the Clerk to the Governors at the school within three working days of receipt of your rejection/selection outlining the nature of your complaint.

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