

## **GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS**

### **Staywell's Recruitment Process**

**Please read the following carefully before completing your application form**

#### **1 Selecting the best person for the job**

As part of our commitment to equal opportunities, all candidates are treated in exactly the same way throughout all aspects of the recruitment process. It is vital that you take care in completing the application form as fully as possible. The information in it will guide us in considering whether you have the right skills and/or experience for the job. Curriculum Vitae or other unsolicited information will not be taken into account unless specifically requested of all applicants. We cannot make assumptions about your experience or skills – please spell them out!

#### **2 Job description and person specification**

The **job description** describes the duties of the job. It sets out the range of responsibilities and tasks. The **person specification** describes the person we are looking for by outlining the abilities, skills and experience needed to do the job. We will be looking at your application form to see how you fit the person specification: the extent to which you have the relevant skills and experience.

You need to consider

- **is the job description one you are interested in?**
- **do you think you have the skills and experience to apply for the vacancy?**
- **can you demonstrate this on your form?**

#### **3 The application form**

##### **a) Personal Details**

Make sure that your name, address and post code, telephone number and email address are written or typed clearly. If you move house after sending in your form and before being interviewed, please let us know as soon as possible.

##### **b) Education and Training**

Give a list of formal and informal training. Formal training is that which is certified, e.g. a degree. Sometimes we ask for specific qualifications. You may need to provide information so that we can assess whether you meet the qualification requirements, e.g. relevant qualification for social work, or accountancy. Make sure you have not left out anything important.

##### **c) Present and previous employment**

Starting with your current or last employer, list all the employers you have worked for. Provide the job title and the period you worked for them. If possible give the exact dates, e.g. 25/3/12 to 31/3/14. Describe the *main* duties of the post, in one or two sentences only. This information may be used to assess whether you meet the experience criteria for the vacancy. Check that the dates are correct and in order. Please account for any gaps in employment.

##### **d) Experience**

This is probably the most important part of the form: you have to make a case here for selection. Do not repeat your career history, use only the relevant parts, drawing out the skills you have developed. It is usually a good idea to use extracts from the person specification as headings and answer them as questions. However, do not just repeat what we're asking for. You have to demonstrate how your experience

matches the criteria (see example on this page). In considering your experience, remember all your previous work and draw on this to demonstrate that you have the necessary skills. Do not forget other relevant experience outside work, such as community/voluntary/leisure and other interests – if they contribute to meeting the person specification. Describe any relevant skills this has helped you develop. Remember, it is your skills and abilities relevant to this job that we are looking for. You do not have to write several pages in support of your application, but rather focus on ensuring you meet the essential criteria in the person specification.

**e) Some general points to bear in mind**

Your form should be written in a concise, well organised and positive way. Use active words such as 'I organised' or 'I planned' or 'I do'. It may help you to do a rough draft first. This avoids mistakes and allows you to organise your application properly. Applications should preferably be typed. If handwritten, use clear handwriting in an organised way to facilitate clarity, as you need to remember that selection panel members will be reading many applications. Do not send in the same application for different jobs – pay attention to the requirements listed in this person specification. Send your completed application form to the address indicated on the covering letter. Ensure you are clear about the job, the department and team you will be working in. If you have any queries, phone us and ask for clarification (020 8942 8256). Make sure that your application form is sent in plenty of time to meet the closing date. Only in exceptional circumstances can the closing date be extended.

**f) Using the person specification to help you fill in the form**

You may want to use the points in the person specification as headings when filling in the section of the application form that says 'How you meet the person specification for the role'. Or you may prefer to write a paragraph on each criteria. An example of meeting the '*Ability to write clearly*' criteria in the person specification, might be met by the following: *'In my last job, I produced written reports and minutes, prepared agendas and distributed relevant papers to the Resources Group Committee. In doing so I recognised the need to be able to sum up points clearly and concisely, set out actions and provide an accurate record of the meeting, proof reading the final copy. I enjoy writing and believe I express myself well.'*

**g) Legal and organisational requirements when completing an application form**

- **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974:** You should not sign the Voluntary Declaration without being clear about what you have to reveal about yourself. For instance, you do not need to disclose convictions which would be deemed as being spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, or cautions, reprimands and final warnings which are over five years old, unless they are exempt from the Act.
- **Referees:** These must be known to you in a work capacity, and should be given by the person who line managed you. If this is not possible you should clearly explain the relationship and the reason for giving another person as a referee. It may be someone who can comment in your ability, skills, experience, e.g. a community leader you have been doing community work with, such as setting up a crèche or sports club.

#### **4 The Interview**

All short-listed candidates will be invited, by letter, by telephone or by email, to attend an interview. We will inform you of the time, location, and contact for the interview, as well as notice of any test or exercise you may be asked to do at the interview.

For some posts, short-listed candidates will also be asked to attend an assessment centre to undertake a test, or series of tests, designed to assess applicants' suitability for the post.

The recruitment and selection panel will be comprised of a minimum of two/three people, and will normally include the relevant line manager of the post.

Applicants will be asked questions relating to the job description, person specification and application, and the panel will take notes during the course of the interview. This is part of the procedure to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly. If you are not sure that you have understood the question, do not be afraid to ask for it to be repeated, or re-phrased. Take your time and ensure you have included all the main points you want to get across in your answer. In preparation for the interview, take the opportunity to read through the job description, application form, and any other literature sent as part of the information pack, and be prepared to talk about your experience, giving examples that illustrate your ability to do particular parts of the job. If you have any special requirements that would allow you to participate more fully in the interview, let the recruitment administrator know when you telephone to confirm your attendance at interview.

## **5 Job offers**

Job offers may be subject to receipt of two satisfactory references, Disclosure of Criminal Records and completion of a Medical Questionnaire. Confirmation in post will be subject to satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period and completion of any mandatory training.

## **6 Feedback**

All unsuccessful interviewed applicants are encouraged to request telephone feedback. This will be given within seven days of the request, usually by the chair of the recruitment panel.

Receiving constructive feedback can be useful for helping you in future interviews. Feedback should be a two-way process. It is important to use the information given to you positively.

You should also give feedback on how the process felt for you.