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Application Guidance for Candidates

Version Date: September 2024



COLLABORATIVE



COURAGEOUS



COMPASSIONATE



ACCOUNTABLE



Cambridge City Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk.

The Recruitment Process

Advertising and Applications

All vacancies at Cambridge City Council, which are open to external applicants, will be advertised on our jobs website www.cambridge.gov.uk/careers

In the first instance, you will be required to submit completed **application** online for a specific role via our jobs website.

As part of our commitment to Equal Opportunities we want to ensure that every applicant is treated fairly and therefore, we also accept applications in alternative formats such as hard copy. The Recruitment Team will be happy to discuss this with you.

The information you provide in your **application** is the only information that will be used in determining whether or not you will be short listed for the selection process. The **Job Description** for the role lists the main duties of the post and the **Person Specification** details the specific skills and knowledge required. You should look at these carefully and consider how you can match them in terms of your own experience, skills and knowledge.

You must tailor your application to the specific job.

Applicants with Disabilities

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disability as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

This covers a wide range of impairments as well as hidden impairments and illnesses. Under the Act, the Council has an obligation to ensure that:

- 1. Disabled people receive fair treatment throughout the recruitment and selection process and in their employment with the Council;**
- 2. Adjustments are made wherever reasonable to do so to allow disabled applicants to compete to the best of their ability during the recruitment process and to assist them in their employment with the Council.**

The Council is committed to fulfilling these obligations.

If you require assistance in completing an application form or need to make your application in an alternative format, please do not hesitate to contact the Recruitment Team: recruitment@cambridge.gov.uk

If you are an applicant with a health condition or a disability you can access additional support [GOV.UK](#), [Jobcentre Plus](#) and [Remploy](#).

Declarations

If you are known to a Councillor or employee of the Council, we ask that you tell us so that we can make sure that all applications are treated fairly. Canvassing any Councillor or employee of this Council (i.e. seeking to gain an unfair advantage through personal contacts) will disqualify your application.

Personal Details and Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Cambridge City Council is committed to a policy of equal opportunities in employment as well as service provision. To ensure that our Equal Opportunities Policy is effective we ask that you complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring form. We are committed to our workforce being representative of the community that we serve and equalities monitoring therefore enables us to examine the make-up of our applicants and recruits; we can then analyse our practices and procedures and address any inequalities and ensure compliance with legislative requirements.

The monitoring information which we collect will enable us to ensure that our procedures are as fair and accessible as possible. Data will be analysed to spot trends and remove barriers or target areas where our policies and practices can be improved to boost equal opportunity.

Shortlisting

After the closing date of the vacancy, the applications are read carefully to see how much each individual's knowledge, skills and experience match the requirements of the job role. Applicants who, in the opinion of the selection panel, best meet the requirements of the job are normally shortlisted for interview.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application, whether or not you have been shortlisted for interview after the closing date of the vacancy.

Interviews

At the interview, the panel will ask questions which are intended to allow you to expand on your application and to demonstrate the extent to which you meet the requirements of the post. You will also have the opportunity to ask questions about the job and conditions of service.

The interview panel is made up of at least two panel members who will ask each candidate the same basic set of questions. Supplementary questions may be asked based on the answers that you provide. In addition, you may be asked specific questions which relate to areas unique to you e.g. previous work history.

All the interviewers will take notes throughout the interview. The notes will enable the interviewers to recall which candidate said what in order to determine the best candidate for the job. It also provides a method of recording the interviewer's decision in a clear and consistent way.

In addition, the Council conducts tests, written exercises, presentations or other assessments in appropriate circumstances; you may therefore also be asked to undertake such exercises as part of the selection process for this vacancy. If this is the case, you will usually be notified in the interview letter.

Fair Recruitment

The City Council puts great importance on ensuring that every stage in our recruitment process is fair and properly carried out. We have a duty to ensure that everyone is treated in a non-discriminatory way. We hope that you will feel that you have been treated fairly even if you are not appointed.

If you want to discuss why you have not been successful, please contact the recruiting manager in the first instance; who will be pleased to give you feedback.

Applicant Privacy Notice

As part of any recruitment process, Cambridge City Council collects and processes personal data relating to job applicants. We are committed to being transparent about how we collect and use that data, and in meeting our data protection obligations.

Full details can be found [online here](#).

Completing the Application

Contact Details

Please ensure that you provide your contact details fully and clearly so that we can contact you easily and quickly should you be shortlisted.

Eligibility to work in the UK

Please indicate whether there are any restrictions to your residence in the UK that might affect your right to take up employment in the UK and also whether you require a work permit.

It is also essential that you provide your National Insurance Number.

Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. We take this responsibility seriously and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Therefore, we ask you to declare if you have ever been the subject of a child, young person or adults at risk protection concern, allegation or investigation, even if no further action was taken.

All information disclosed will be kept confidential and will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Educational, Technical and Professional Qualifications

We are interested in any form of education you have followed, including any course which did not lead to an examination or qualification. The information you give should include details of any technical, professional or other relevant qualifications.

We will require documentary evidence of any necessary qualifications required for the post.

Immigration Act 2016

Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016, known as Fluency Duty, states that Cambridge City Council must ensure that officers who carry out a role in which, as a regular and intrinsic part of the role, requires the post holder to speak to members of the public must do so to a defined level of spoken English proficiency.

For roles that are affected by the Fluency Duty, the applicant's proficiency will be assessed during the interview process to ensure that they meet the proficiency requirement for the position applied for.

Employment History & Work Experience

Details of present and past employment will be required. If you have already left school, college or a training programme and have not yet had a full time or permanent job, please give details of any other employment that you may have had such as work experience gained on Government training schemes, part time work, holiday work and voluntary work.

Personal Development

We are interested in any form of personal development that you have undertaken. Therefore, please include details of any relevant training courses but also other forms of learning, voluntary work or responsibilities held.

Supporting Statement

This is your opportunity to 'sell' yourself to us. You should clearly demonstrate how your own knowledge, skills and experience match the requirements of the job as detailed in the person specification and job description.

Remember, if you do not tell us, we will not know; we will not make assumptions about you or your abilities or experience.

By providing and referencing relevant examples in your statement, you will be matching your experience and capabilities against the person specification and job profile.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, Disclosure and Barring Service & Basic Disclosures

Cambridge City Council is committed to the fair treatment of job applicants and existing staff regardless of whether someone has a criminal record.

Under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, it is reasonable for employers to ask individuals for details of any "unspent" criminal convictions, (Cambridge City Council do ask applicants whether they have any unspent convictions on the application form). The Act states that if an offender remains free of further convictions for a specified period (the "rehabilitation period") the conviction becomes "spent". Under the Act, a rehabilitated person is not normally required to disclose "spent" convictions when applying for a job. Special care will be taken when dealing with evidence of convictions to ensure that "spent" convictions are identified and disregarded.

For posts that involve **working with children, young people and adults at risk**, which are exempt from the Act, all convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings which would appear on a DBS certificate should be disclosed, whether 'spent' or 'unspent'.

For posts which require access to **Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC), Department of Work & Pensions (DWP)** systems and the **PSN-connected network** "unspent" convictions only should be disclosed.

Applicants are required to submit the information relating to convictions (as described above) with their application for the attention of Victoria Jameson, Recruitment Manager. Should you wish to discuss this matter or require any assistance. please contact victoria.jameson@cambridge.gov.uk. You should be reassured that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process. If you are not shortlisted the information will be destroyed.

The Council is registered with the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) to carry out Criminal Record Checks and Basic Disclosures. A **DBS Criminal Records Check** is used to assess job applicant's suitability for positions that involve working with children, young people or adults at risk; which are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

A **Basic Disclosure** is used to assess job applicants' suitability for positions that require access to Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC), Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) Systems and the PSN-connected network.

If there are matters revealed in a disclosure that may affect your employment with the City Council, we will discuss these with you. However, a criminal record will not necessarily prevent someone from being appointed to or employed in a post. Decisions will depend on the post and the offence(s).

Candidates will be selected on the basis of evidence of essential skills, knowledge and experience.

At the interview stage, or during a separate conversation, discussion will take place about any offences or other matters that might be relevant to the post. Please note that all shortlisted applicants for posts working with children, young people or adults at risk will be required to complete a further Declaration of Criminal Record form.

All shortlisted applicants for posts that require access to Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC), Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) systems and the PSN-connected network, will be required to complete a further Declaration of "unspent" Criminal Record form.

Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the post, failure to provide satisfactory explanation or even providing false information could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

If you wish to discuss any concerns or require further information on Criminal Records Checks and Basic Disclosures you can request a copy of the Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practice and/or of the City Council's written policy on Criminal Records Checks/ Basic disclosures by contacting the Recruitment Team: recruitment@cambridge.gov.uk

Cambridge City Council complies with the Disclosure & Barring Service Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against any applicant on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed from the disclosure process. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us as it will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.

Certificate of Good Conduct

If you have lived abroad for a period of 6 months or more within the last 5 years, in addition to the basic disclosure check, a Certificate of Good Conduct will be required from the country you lived in. A Certificate of Good Conduct is a police records check from the relevant country as the Disclosure & Barring Service cannot currently access overseas criminal records or other relevant information as part of its Disclosure service.

You will be expected to obtain the Certificate yourself and will not be able to commence employment with us until both the Certificate of Good Conduct and Basic Disclosure are received and cleared by us.

You can find further guidance on how to go about obtaining a Certificate of Good Conduct from the country you lived in at <http://www.crb.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=2243>.

Pre-Employment Checks

If you are successful following the recruitment process, you will be notified verbally by the Recruiting Manager.

A conditional offer of employment will be made at this stage, subject to:

Satisfactory References

We will require two references that are satisfactory to the Council. Your references should cover your last two years of continuous employment. One of the referees should be your present or most recent employer.

We may request to take up references if you are shortlisted, although your consent will be sought before we contact any referee.

Personal references are not accepted. Please note that where you may not be able to provide employment references (for whatever reason); we can discuss this with you individually and provide advice and guidance as necessary. Please be assured that this is not a barrier to you making an application.

Satisfactory Pre-Employment Medical Check

You will need to complete a medical questionnaire for submission to our Occupational Health Service and may be required to attend for a full examination.

Satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service/ Basic Disclosure Certificates

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or Basic Disclosure Certificate will be required for some posts e.g., those that involve working with children, young people and adults at risk.

You will be advised if this is the case.

Identity and Immigration, Asylum & Nationality Act Documentation

You will be required to show some documentary evidence at offer stage that confirms your name, date of birth, address and national insurance number.

You will be required to supply evidence of your status to remain and work in the UK, by providing an original document(s) as specified by the Immigration, Asylum & Nationality Act 2006. Information on which documents that are acceptable will be provided to you.

If you require this document in an alternative format please contact recruitment@cambridge.gov.uk.