



Guidance on your application

Your application form is an important part of our recruitment process – it is how we get to know you and assess your ability to do the job. It enables us to decide whether or not to shortlist you for interview and therefore plays a vital role in the recruitment process.

We do not take into account any previous applications or prior knowledge of you and ask all applicants to complete our application form in full.

How we shortlist

When we shortlist, we look at your experience, skills, knowledge, attainment and other information **in line with the job description and person specification**. You will find copies of these in your job pack which have been provided electronically or in hard copy.

The job description outlines the main responsibilities and duties of the post, and a person specification outlines the skills, abilities, experience and qualifications that you require to fulfil these duties.

Please ensure you read the job description and person specification before you begin to complete the form so you have in mind the skills and knowledge we are looking for. Applicants who are disabled under the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 will be automatically short listed provided they meet the essential qualifications and experience required by the post.

How to complete your application form

General hints

- Read the job description and person specification before you start
- Use black ink so we can clearly photocopy forms for short listing and interviewing
- Complete all sections of the form as fully as possible
- Clearly label and number any continuation sheets with your name and the post you are applying for and list the number of attachments on the main application form. This allows us to check we have all the information you want us to have before we shortlist.
- **Keep a copy of the application form for your own records.**

'Why are you applying for this job?' Section 10

Applicants must address each point of the person specification sequentially within Section 10 of your application. Applications where this has not been fulfilled will not be considered. Short listing is carried out on the basis of how well you meet the requirements of the person specification. **You should mention any experience you have had which shows how you could meet these requirements when you fill in your application form.** You can use skills you have gained from community and voluntary work, leisure interests and your home life, as well as those from your past and present employment. Use clearly labelled continuation pages if required.

References

We will contact your references prior to interview unless you have ticked the boxes on the application form indicating not to. References will not be used as part of the interview process, but

will be taken into account if you are offered the post. We must receive two satisfactory references about you before we can formally offer you the post.

Attendance

Please list your absences in the past 12 months. Absences related to a disability, or to a previous stress condition should not be included in the Attendance Section of the Application Form. Please record them on an information sheet, place it in a separate sealed envelope and mark it '*Confidential - For the attention of the Personnel Officer*'

"Confidential - for the attention of the Personnel Officer"

All information provided on a "Confidential - for the attention of the personnel officer" basis is usually withheld from the recruitment and selection panel until short listing is complete. The information is made available to the panel for the interview and you should anticipate being asked about it.

Rehabilitation of Offenders

Headstart requires all applicants to disclose criminal convictions. Some posts require information relating to both "spent" and "unspent" convictions whereas other posts require "unspent" information only. Applicants who have been short listed for posts involving regular contact with children or vulnerable adults will be required to apply for either a standard or enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau. See the enclosed "Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 Guidance Notes" (below).

Disability Guidance

The Equality Act 2010 protects people with disabilities from unlawful discrimination. To meet the Act's definition, a person must have a physical or mental impairment, which has substantial long-term effects on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. If we know you have a disability we will make adjustments or special arrangements, if required, to allow you to attend the interview should you be shortlisted for the role.

What do I do now?

Once your application form is completed and you are happy that you have provided all the information we require to shortlist, please email by return or send your application to the address shown on the application form. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope or postcard if you would like receipt of your application form to be acknowledged.

Other important information...

Data Protection

The personal information submitted by you on this application form and in any accompanying documents will be used by persons the governing body delegates responsibility to and any other person it appoints to assist, for the purpose of appointing to the job applied for and to monitor the effectiveness, efficiency and fairness of the selection process. The information may also be used in internal proceedings to consider a complaint about the selection process and/or to defend the school against a legal challenge to the fairness of the selection process from any interested party. For these reasons, the information you submit will be kept for 6 months if you are not short-listed and 2 years if you are. The information supplied by you will also be subject to verification and we may need to contact people and/or organisations to confirm some of the facts contained in your application, e.g. referees, previous employers, educational establishments, examination bodies, etc. I have read the above statement and consent to the personal data submitted with this job application being used for the purposes described. This School is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers and may use the information you have provided on this form within the School for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information with other bodies administering public funds solely for these purposes

Evidence of Qualifications

If invited to interview, you will be required to provide evidence to prove that you hold the qualifications, which are relevant to the appointment. If the post requires you to travel on official business you will be required to produce your drivers licence and certificate of insurance to your manager for inspection upon appointment.

Health Statement

Where an appointment is offered, you will be required to complete a health questionnaire which must be cleared by Headstart School prior to taking up your post. You will be required to give permission for the Company to contact your GP for a report. You may also be required to have a medical examination.

Asylum and Immigration Act 1996

It is a criminal offence to employ persons whose immigration status prevents them from working in this country. The Act does not affect citizens of the UK, Ireland, European Economic Area and the Commonwealth, provided they have the right to abode in the UK.

You will be required, if appointed, to provide evidence that you are entitled to work in this country. Official confirmation of your national insurance number on a P45, P60, plastic NI number card, former payslip or a letter from the Inland Revenue or other Government Department can be provided; alternatively, a list of acceptable documents is available on request.

Applications to Job Share

If you are applying on a job share basis, please indicate this on the application form, and as far as possible, the working sessions that you would prefer. This enables us to match you with other job share applicants who have indicated complementary working sessions. Please remember that the more you restrict the working sessions available to you, the more difficult it will be for us to find you a partner. Therefore, try and be as flexible as possible.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974): Guidance Notes

You are required to declare any criminal convictions (including bind over and cautions) which are not “spent” in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Some of our posts carry exempt status under the provisions of the Act for which you are required to declare any convictions regardless of whether or not the time limit has elapsed.

As this post involves working with or has access to children or vulnerable adults and/or their records, the successful candidate will require an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, the Police Act 1997 as amended by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

Please read these guidance notes carefully before completing the section on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 on the Application Form.

Disclosure of Criminal Convictions

Under this Act you are required to disclose details of previous convictions, until a certain length of time passes and the convictions become “spent”.

Under the above Act you do not need to provide details about either minor motoring offences or previous convictions once they become “spent”. This includes the date you sign the application form.

Please note the following when considering whether a conviction is spent:-

- i. "spent" periods are halved if the conviction took place when you were aged 17 or less;
- ii. a sentence of longer than 2½ years in prison will never become "spent";
- iii. a sentence of preventive detention and a sentence of detention during Her Majesty's pleasure is never "spent"; or
- iv. it is immaterial for the process of calculating a "spent" conviction whether the sentence is suspended or not.

The information you provide will be treated strictly confidentially. Having a conviction will not necessarily bar you from employment. This will depend on the circumstances and background to the offence(s) which will be taken into account when considering how suitable you are for the type of work involved, should your application be successful.

Failure to disclose any "unspent" convictions may result in the offer of employment being withdrawn. If already appointed, you could be dismissed without notice.

Please see the list below which details the rehabilitation periods for criminal convictions.

Criminal Convictions and Time Periods before Becoming "Spent"

Sentence	Become spent after
For a sentence of imprisonment or youth custody exceeding six months but not exceeding two and a half years.	10 years
For a sentence of imprisonment or youth custody not exceeding six months.	7 years
For a sentence of Borstal training.	7 years
For a fine or other sentence under this Act, not otherwise covered in this table.	5 years
For an absolute discharge.	6 months
For a probation order, conditional discharge or bind over, fit person orders, supervision order or care order under the Children and Young Persons' Acts (and equivalent in Scotland).	1 year or until the order expires (whichever is the longer)
For cashiering, discharge with Ignominy or dismissal with disgrace from Her Majesty's Service.	10 years
For dismissal from Her Majesty's Service.	7 years
Any sentence of detention in respect of a conviction in service disciplinary proceedings.	5 years
For detention by direction of Home Secretary:	
• for a period exceeding six months but not exceeding two and a half years.	5 years
• for a period not exceeding six months.	3 years
• for a detention centre order.	3 years
• for a remand home order, an approved school order or attendance centre order.	The period of the order plus a further year after the order expires
• for a hospital order under the Mental Health Acts.	The period of the order plus a further 2 years after the order expires. (With a minimum of 5 years from the date of conviction.)