

SWITCH.uk.com Job Application Form Guidance Notes

Top Tips

- When completing your application, please ensure that you are showing us that you meet at least all of the essential criteria for the job. Different jobs require different skills, knowledge, competencies and qualifications so please ensure you submit a fresh application for each job you apply for.
- Please don't send us CVs. They will not be accepted as a substitute for a completed application form.
- You may want to do a rough draft of your application first, especially if you are handwriting it.
- If you get a chance, it's always a good idea to keep a copy of your form so that you can see what you have written. This is especially useful for when you ask for feedback about your application/ interview.
- If you get the opportunity, ask someone to check your form before you send it to us.
- Your form should arrive by no later than 5.00pm on the closing date unless otherwise stated.
- When completing section 6 (Personal Statement) you may use additional paper if necessary.

These guidance notes are split into the sections which are on the Application Form

Section 1 Personal Details

Please complete all the boxes relevant to you. If you have changed your surname before, for whatever reason, please give us your previous name(s).

Section 2 Present Employment

This should only be completed if you are currently working. This does not only apply to paid work, so tell us about any voluntary work or work experience placements that you are doing at the moment. If now unemployed give details of last employer.

Section 3 Previous Employment

Please tell us about your experience in a working environment. Again, you should try and include any unpaid work you have done in the past. Please list your experience in chronological order with most recent first.

Section 4 Education

Please tell us about any qualifications you may possess, please list in order of importance and relevance, with the highest first.

Section 5 Training and Development

Please tell us about any short courses that you have attended, or any certificates or awards that you have received which you feel may be relevant.

Section 6 Personal Statement

In this section you will have the opportunity to detail your experience, skills, knowledge and competencies in relation to this role.

This is your opportunity to tell us about yourself, and how you best fit the requirements of the job. In order to get an interview, you need to demonstrate to us that you meet at least all of the essential criteria on the Person Specification. If too many applicants meet all the essential criteria, the shortlist will be reduced by selection of those who meet some or all of the desirable criteria. When describing your experience, it can be a good idea to give an example of real-life situations which demonstrate your ability to perform certain tasks.

When completing this section, you may want to think about any experience, skills, knowledge or competencies which you have developed in your domestic life that can be transferred usefully into the workplace. These are sometimes known as 'transferable skills'.

It can also be a good idea to tick off each requirement on the Person Specification as you go along so that you don't miss any when completing your Application Form.

Please use additional paper if necessary.

Section 7 Criminal Convictions and Cautions

If the post you are applying for is subject to a CRB check you must provide details of all convictions including cautions, reprimands, warnings, investigations or pending prosecutions irrespective of whether they are spent or unspent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

The criminal record information you are required to provide is not used for shortlisting purposes. However, if you are shortlisted for interview, your criminal record information will be discussed with you if the interview panel feel it is relevant to the job for which you are applying.

The suitability of all prospective employees will be assessed during the recruitment process in line with this commitment. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences. Criminal record information is dealt with in accordance with the Criminal Records Bureau Code of Practice.

Section 8 Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults

SWITCH.uk.com is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment.

Posts involving work with children and vulnerable adults are designated under the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as a 'designated activity' and will require you to undergo CRB check at an enhanced level.

If a post requires a CRB check it will be clearly indicated in the advert and job description.

Only the successful candidate will be asked to complete a CRB Disclosure application form.

For posts that do not require a CRB check we ask that you tell us about unspent convictions including cautions, reprimands, warnings, and investigations or pending prosecutions.

Section 9 Disability Discrimination Act

Please use this section to tell us whether or not you consider yourself to be disabled. Regardless of your answer to this question, you may want to tell us about any specific requirements that you may have at the interview. This will help us to make the necessary arrangements for you at the interview stage. Please find below the definition of Disability and a short explanation of it.

We use the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995/2005 definition of disability which is:

'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

We thought it might help you to answer the question if we provided some examples. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list and is given for guidance only.

- Long-term: has lasted or is likely to last more than 12 months
- Hearing, or visual impairments (If you wear glasses or contact lenses this is not normally considered a disability)
- Co-ordination, dexterity or mobility (e.g. polio, spinal cord injury, back problems, repetitive strain injury)
- Mental health (e.g. schizophrenia, depression, severe phobias)
- Speech impairment (e.g. stammering)
- Learning disabilities (e.g. Down's syndrome)

- Other physical or medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, arthritis, cardiovascular conditions, haemophilia, asthma, cancer, AIDS, facial disfigurement, sickle cell, dyslexia)

We also operate a guaranteed interview scheme for disabled people. Those people with disabilities who declare their disability in this section and who fulfil all of the essential criteria on the person specification will be selected for interview.

If you feel that you are able to carry out the duties and responsibilities set out in the job description and you meet the essential criteria in the Person Specification, please complete an application. Where possible SWITCH.uk.com will make 'reasonable adjustments' to a job where appropriate under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Section 10 Attendance

Please use this section to tell us about your attendance at work, school and college over the last 24 months. It would be useful for you to tell us how many times you have been absent. If the absence was disability or pregnancy related, please indicate this. We ask you for this information so that we can take the nature of the absence into account when selecting for interview.

Section 11 References

When providing names and details of referees, please ensure that at least one of them is a present or most recent employer. If you are not currently in employment and /or your last employer cannot give you a reference because the organisation no longer exists, you should attempt to get a reference from a professional person. If you have just left school, college, university or some kind of recruitment/skills agency, you should use your contact there as a referee. References should not be provided by relatives, partners or close friends. If you have any problems with providing names of referees, please contact us.

Applicants should note that where the post involves access to children and other client groups, references relevant to the area of work are required and previous employers not quoted as referees may be contacted. In line with our recruitment policy, applicants shortlisted for posts involving safeguarding, it will be necessary to approach both referees at the shortlisting stage irrespective of whether you indicate you do not wish your referees to be contacted on the application form.

Section 12 Recruitment Monitoring

It would be really helpful if you could complete this section for us.

SWITCH.uk.com is committed to equality of opportunity in employment and service delivery and the information you provide will help us to ensure fair and equal treatment of applicants and employees alike.

The details you supply will be stored separately to the information on the rest of the application form and will not be used as a basis for decision-making within the selection process.

This information will remain confidential but, should you be appointed, may become part of your personal record.

It will ensure that no-one is unfairly discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, sexuality, disability, age or any other unjustifiable criterion when applying for a job or during the course of their employment with SWITCH.uk.com.

All employees have equal access to training and career development regardless of any of the considerations mentioned above. The training needs of particular groups of employees who are under-represented in specific occupations and management posts will receive positive attention.

The purpose of monitoring is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policy and take action where evidence shows unfair treatment or where particular communities are not adequately reflected within the workforce.

An employee who has a concern regarding unfair discrimination or harassment at work may use one of the companies formal procedures e.g. grievance, bullying, harassment and whistle blowing

Section 13 Declaration

This section basically is asking you to sign and date the form to say that you have given us a true and accurate application form and that you have read all of the guidance notes which are relevant to you in applying for this position. If you are submitting the form electronically you will be asked to sign the form should you proceed to the interview stage.

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Appendix A

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 enables criminal convictions to become 'spent' or forgotten after a 'rehabilitation period'. After this period, with certain exceptions (see below), a person with a conviction is not legally obliged to mention it when applying for a job. The Act is more likely to help people with few and/or minor convictions because further convictions usually extend rehabilitation periods. People with many convictions, especially serious convictions, may not benefit from the Act unless the convictions are very old.

Rehabilitation periods

The length of the rehabilitation period depends on the sentence given – not the offence committed. For a custodial sentence, the rehabilitation period is decided by the original sentence, not the time served. Custodial sentences of more than two-and-a-half years can never become spent.

The following sentences become spent after fixed rehabilitation periods from the date of conviction: Sentence	Rehabilitation period People aged under 18 when convicted	Rehabilitation period People aged 18 or over when convicted
Prison sentences of 6 months or less	3½ years	7 years
Prison sentences of more than 6 months to 2 ½ years	5 years	10 years
Borstal (abolished in 1983)	7 years	7 years
Detention Centres (abolished in 1988)	3 years	3 years
Fines, compensation, probation, community service, combination, action plan, curfew, drug treatment and testing, and reparation orders	2½ years	5 years
Absolute discharge	6 months	6 months

1 Including suspended sentences, youth custody (abolished in 1988) and detention in a young offender institution (abolished for under 18 year olds in 2000 and for those aged 18-20 in 2001).

2 Even if subsequently imprisoned for fine default.

3 For people convicted on or after 3 February 1995. These orders are now called community rehabilitation orders.

4 These orders are now called community punishment orders.

5 These orders are now called community punishment and rehabilitation orders