

Your Application and Our Recruitment Process

1 The Application Form

Please read this guidance carefully before you complete the application.

Orkney Islands Council's Equal Opportunities Policy means that we want to ensure that every applicant is treated fairly.

The information you provide in your application form is the only information we will use in deciding whether or not you will be shortlisted for the selection process. This guidance has been designed to help you complete the application as effectively as possible.

The job description and person specification which are enclosed provide you with the main duties of the post and the skills and experience we are looking for in the postholder.

Read these documents carefully. Remember – the application form should contain evidence to support your relevant skills and experience.

We will only accept applications made using the Council application form, either online or paper. CV's will not be accepted as an alternative.

Completing Your Application

Personal Details – Please enter your details fully and clearly so we may contact you about your application.

Applicants with Disabilities – The Council guarantees to interview applicants who indicate they have a disability and meet the essential criteria for the job. If you require any assistance at any stage in the process please detail this on your application.

Education and Qualifications – Please provide details of all qualifications, training or membership of professional bodies. Do not attach originals or copies of qualifications etc.

Present/Most Recent Employment – Please provide brief details of your current or most recent position, with an emphasis where possible on those areas most relevant for your application.

Previous Employment – Please detail all previous posts, including voluntary work. Ensure you give an explanation for any employment gaps.

Supporting Statement – This section is very important to your application. It gives you the opportunity to explain why you have applied for the post and how your skills and experience support your application.

Study the job description and person specification and provide specific examples of work and other experience to relate to the criteria listed within these documents. Don't forget to include any relevant voluntary or community work.

References – We are required obtain references to cover the last 3 years employment and academic history. As a minimum, we require to obtain 2 references. **References are not obtained until an offer of employment has been made.**

We strongly advise that you contact the individuals in advance to advise that we will be approaching them for a reference very soon.

Current/Most Recent Employment - The first reference should be from your current or most recent employer. This should be a Line Manager who can comment on your performance, attendance and suitability for the post which you have been offered. This should not be a relative or a work colleague providing a reference on a personal basis.

Subsequent References - Where you have been in the same employment for 3 or more years, we will be required to obtain a second reference, either from another individual within your current employment or from someone known to you personally who can confirm your suitability for the post which you have been conditionally offered.

Self Employment - If you have been self-employed during this period we will require to obtain a reference from HRMC, your bank, accountant, solicitor, or from a trade or client reference.

Education - If you have been in education during the 3 year period, then we will require to obtain a reference from a tutor/teacher/educational professional.

Gaps in Employment/Education – any gaps in employment of more than 4 weeks in the last 3 years should be verified through obtaining a character reference. An individual providing a character reference should not be a close relative. A close relative is defined as a spouse or partner, parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, sister, brother, child, niece, nephew, grandchild (including 'step' and 'in-law' relationship).

Criminal Convictions – This relates to current criminal convictions only, not those which are deemed as spent in terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. Should the post require a Disclosure Scotland check further details will be provided later on in the process.

Relatives Working for the Council - We need this information to meet our obligations under Part V and VI of the Local Government Act 2000. You should declare a relationship and provide relevant details if you are the parent, grandparent, partner, child, stepchild, adopted child, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece of an existing councillor or employee of the Council or the partner of such a person.

Any applicant who directly or indirectly seeks the support of any councillor or employee for any appointment with the Council will not be entitled to be considered for appointment.

Member of EEA (European Economic Area) – All applicants are required to provide proof of the right to live and work in the UK at their interview. If you are an overseas worker we may be able to consider a Certificate of Sponsorship but this does not guarantee that you will succeed in gaining permission to enter or remain the UK.

All full list of EEA Countries is available on the Home Office website – www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

Jobcentre Work Trials – If you are eligible for Jobcentre Plus Work Trials you will be guaranteed an interview if you meet the essential job criteria. This is a government scheme available through Jobcentre Plus. For more information contact them directly.

Equal Opportunities - The Council is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to promoting equality and social inclusion. The Council operates a policy whose aim is to ensure that unlawful or otherwise unjustifiable discrimination does not take place in recruitment. To help the Council monitor the effectiveness of this policy (and for no other reason) you are asked to provide the information requested on the employment monitoring section.

This section of the application (which gives details of your sex, ethnic origin, date of birth and any disability) will not be made available to the selection panel.

The information you provide on the recruitment monitoring section will be held in confidence by HR & Performance and the details logged onto a confidential recruitment database. The information will be used for statistical purposes to enable the Council to carry out its equal opportunities monitoring obligations.

2 Shortlisting & Interview Process

The shortlisting process is carried out as soon as possible following the closing date and normally within 3 weeks. If you are successful in securing an interview we will endeavour to give you at least one week's notice to allow you time to make suitable arrangements.

Interview invitations are normally sent out using the "E-booking" system. You will receive an email asking you to select an interview time from those available. Slots are allocated on a first come, first served basis so we would advise booking straight away when you receive your email to ensure you get an interview time which is most convenient for you.

If you have not applied using myjobscotland then you will be allocated a specific slot and notified by letter.

It will not normally be possible to reschedule interviews or offer additional times other than in exceptional circumstances.

You will be informed in advance about the selection techniques to be used. These will always relate directly to the selection criteria.

The interview will also offer you the opportunity to learn more about the role and ask any questions you may have.

At your interview you will be told when you will hear the final outcome of your application. This will normally be within 3 working days.

If the post attracts interview expenses this will be clearly detailed in the job advertisement and information will be provided to you explaining how you can make an expense claim.

What you must bring to your interview

Eligibility to Work

All prospective employees are required to confirm their eligibility to work in the UK. You will be required to bring evidence to interview with you in its original form, along with a photocopy of the same for us to retain. Full information on which documents are acceptable will be provided with your interview invitation.

The most common forms of documents which are provided include:-

- A passport; or
- A full birth certificate, along with an official document giving your National Insurance Number (P60, P45, letter from DWP). The birth certificate alone is not accepted, nor is an abbreviated version of the same.

Evidence of Essential Qualification

Where the job description and person specification has detailed essential qualification(s) you will be required to bring those original certificates/evidence to your interview, along with copies of the same for us to retain.

If you are unsuccessful at interview we will destroy the photocopies of evidence of right to work and qualifications immediately.

3 Offer of Employment

All offers of employment are subject to the following:-

- Receipt of satisfactory references
- Medical clearance – you will be given a pre-employment questionnaire to complete and return. This is assessed by our Occupational Health Adviser
- Proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK
- Proof of qualifications and professional registration, where necessary
- Proof of Driving Licence, where necessary
- Disclosure Scotland clearance (and/or equivalent overseas criminal conviction check) where necessary

If you are successful at interview you will be issued with a conditional contract pending receipt of the above.

The contract of employment and start date will be issued following receipt of the above.

References

Satisfactory references are to be obtained as detailed in section 1 above, and employment cannot commence without receipt of these.

Pre-employment Medical Checks

We will issue a medical questionnaire with your offer. This will ascertain your fitness for work. Please complete and return this as quickly as possible. The information will be forwarded, unopened, to our Occupational Health professional for assessment.

Eligibility to Work

Eligibility work checks should have taken place at interview stage. Employment cannot commence without that check being carried out and appropriate certified copies of original documents being retained in the personal file.

Evidence of qualifications

Where the job description and person specification has detailed essential qualification(s) you will be obliged to show us the original certificates/evidence of that qualification(s) and we will take a copy for your personal file.

Posts Which Require Criminal Record Checks

If your post requires PVG Scheme Membership or Disclosure Scotland clearance we will issue the necessary forms with your offer. Again, please ensure a speedy return as this can take up to 15 working days to be processed by Disclosure Scotland and you cannot start work without the appropriate clearance.

Criminal Record Checks – Lived/Worked Abroad

You will need to provide an overseas criminal record check, and if necessary a certified translation of the same, where you fall in to one of the following categories:-

- Resident in the UK for most of your adult life and have spent a period of three months or longer in an overseas country within the last five years. This only applies where you have lived continuously in at least one country for three months or longer; or
- You have moved to the UK within the last ten years having previously lived abroad for most of your adult life.

The relevant Foreign Embassy will be able to provide guidance on the process for each country. Further information can be found at www.fco.gov.uk.

Evidence of Driving Licence

If this is detailed as essential within the job description and person specification we will require to see evidence. We will need to see your original driving licence and a check code issued through DVLA which allows us to confirm categories online.

Further information on the check code is available - <https://www.gov.uk/check-driving-information>.

Professional Registration/Membership

If this is detailed as essential within the job description and person specification we will require to see evidence to confirm the registration/membership.

We would ask for your co-operation in completing the pre-employment checks quickly so we can agree a start date without delay.

4 Feedback

If you want feedback about your application or interview, please contact the recruiting manager who will be pleased to provide this.

5 Data Protection

The personal data you provide during the recruitment process will be held on file for a period of 12 months, at which time they will be destroyed/deleted. If you are successful in appointment the application will be kept in your Personal file for the duration of your employment with Orkney Islands Council.

6 Fair Recruitment

Orkney Islands 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.

Should you feel dissatisfied please contact the Recruiting Manager. If you are still unhappy you should write to HR & Performance giving details of the post you have applied for and we will ensure that the matter is properly investigated.

We will aim to respond to you in writing within three weeks of receiving your letter. If there is a delay in responding to you we will write to you after 10 working days explaining the reasons for the delay and when we expect to be able to respond. If your complaint is found to be valid we will review as appropriate our recruitment procedures.

We hope that you will be successful in your application. However, if you are not, please don't be discouraged from re-applying – your skills and experience may be what we need for our next vacancy.