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Recruitment and Selection Process

Important Information for Applicants

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**THE
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GUIDE TO OUR RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

South Ayrshire Council serves a population of 112,000 residents.

The Council is the biggest employer in the area with 5,200 employees who deliver a diverse range of services to the public. As an organisation, we have committed to a set of values (positive, supportive and respectful to our colleagues and to our customers) which serve to make the Council a great place to work.

We are employer of choice and offer competitive salaries and excellent benefits including flexible working and a final salary pension scheme. We are also committed to our employees' personal development and to helping our workforce gain and enhance the skills and knowledge they need to take them where they want to go.

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY

As part of our policy on equal opportunities, and employment law compliance, we will make sure we do not discriminate against an applicant in the recruitment and selection process because of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

DISABILITY CONFIDENT EMPLOYER



We have a positive approach to employing and retaining people with disabilities and those with health conditions, and we are proud to be recognised as a Disability Confident Employer and to be able to display the Disability Confident Scheme identity. If a disabled applicant can clearly evidence in their application that they meet the essential criteria for the job (as shown in the person specification) they will be given the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities at interview.

MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS

Any applicant who has Additional Support Needs (ASN) or who are, or have been, in Looked After Care (LAC) and who applies for an Apprenticeship opportunity based within the Council, will be guaranteed an interview provided they meet the essential criteria for the post. Applicants should provide this information within their application should they wish this information to be taken into account in their submission.

EXISTING MODERN APPRENTICES

Any existing Council employed Modern Apprentice who meets the essential criteria for any advertised posts will be guaranteed an interview for any substantive post for which they apply. An Apprentice is required to complete a Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) Training Plan (or any other training which ensures completion of the apprenticeship), including those who obtain a substantive post within South Ayrshire Council. Any offer of employment issued will include a clause that the individual will complete the Training Plan as a condition of their employment. The employing Service will allow adequate time for the employee to complete their Training Plan, which is a work-based assessed qualification.

OUR RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Consists of the following stages:

- Advert
- Applying for a Job
- Selection Process
- Unsuccessful candidates
- Recommended candidate

ADVERT

The first stage of the application process is the advert. The advert will also include:

- A job description outlining the job purpose and highlighting the post and service specific responsibilities, as well as the job requirements, along with skills and abilities you will require to evidence both in your application form and in performing the job
- Qualifications required
- Membership/Certificates of professional or occupational bodies required
- Hourly rate/salary
- Job title
- Contract type
- Closing date for applications
- Interview/assessment date

The advert might also include details of any restrictions on the job, for example:

- Any political restrictions under the Local Government and Housing Act (1989)
- If you need to be a member of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG) (and if you will be required to meet the cost of this)
- If you need a disclosure check (and if you will be required to meet the cost of this)

The advert may also provide further information in relation to e.g. South Ayrshire Council Plans etc. plans which may be relevant.

This information will allow you to decide whether you should submit an application form for consideration.

APPLYING FOR A JOB WITH US

South Ayrshire Council invites you to apply on–line via myjobscotland.gov.uk. This system requires you to have access to an email account for correspondence in respect of the recruitment process.

We have adopted a ‘digital by default’ approach to all recruitment and selection correspondence; however a paper application form may be accepted for some positions *by exception*. CV’s will not be accepted in place of, or supplementary to, an application form and will be disregarded unless there are circumstances where, for example, you cannot fill in the application form due to a visual impairment. If you have a disability, we can provide the application form in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or on computer disk.

Your Application Form

The online application form gives you the opportunity to ‘market’ yourself and tell us how your skills, knowledge, qualifications and competence fit the requirements of the job. We will use the information you give us to decide whether to invite you for an interview.

Before you fill in the application form, you should read the guidance notes. You should read the instructions and questions carefully, and answer the questions fully. You should look at the job description and any other supporting information and tell us how your skills, knowledge, qualifications and competence match our needs.

Part of the application form asks about your *‘relevant skills, knowledge, experience or other factors relevant to the position’* and is your opportunity to provide specific examples of your work, or other activities, which demonstrate your ability to meet the requirements of the post.

We will ask for references if you are offered a position with us so you should include your current or most recent employer, making sure they know we may approach them for a reference. Please see *Appendix 1* for further detailed guidance.

Disabled applicants should advise the named contact on recruitment correspondence if there are any types of aids, adaptations, equipment or special arrangements that would require to be made available for the selection process.

You should contact our Recruitment Team on 01292 559329 if you require further support and guidance on how to apply.

Finally, make sure your application is submitted no later than the closing date shown on the advert.

SELECTION PROCESS

We use values based recruitment and selection process, and the values and behaviours that you will need to demonstrate throughout the selection process can be found [here](#).

If you are successful in your application, you will be invited by e-mail to attend a face to face interview. The interview may also be accompanied by some other form of assessment related to the competencies for the job. You may also be asked to complete -

- **In-Tray exercise** - a work based scenario that will assess the practical aspects of the job, such as your problem solving abilities and how you make decisions on an appropriate course of action
- **Presentation** - we may ask you to give a presentation on a particular subject. We use presentations to assess your understanding of the subject, research skills, ability to prioritise important information, communication skills, use of technology and how you perform under pressure and within time limits
- **Personality profiles (psychometric tests)** - this will take the format of a questionnaire that you will have to complete before the interview. You will be given feedback and this will be used in conjunction with other selection methods listed as part of the recruitment and selection process
- **Ability Tests** - where a post involves practical skills e.g. word processing or telephone techniques, ability tests will be used

1.1. Before Your Interview

Find out as much as you can about us and the job – read all the materials provided in the application pack and our [website](#) is also a great source of information. You should look at our Council Plan, our main aims, and the latest news.

Use the job description to prepare for your interview by getting a good understanding of what's required, and thinking about how your experience meets these requirements.

1.2. At Interview

You will be asked at least one question from our values and behaviours. It is important to remember when answering values based interview questions that you are being asked to provide specific examples that demonstrate how you have used your skills in the past. When providing these examples you may find it useful to structure your answer using the 'STAR' approach:

- Situation – In what context did you show these skills?
- Task – What was your role or responsibility?
- Action – What was it that you did?
- Result – What was the outcome?

You will also be asked to provide other documentation at interview.

- **Original qualifications and membership certificates of professional or occupational bodies** – these will be scanned and retained
- **Completed Criminal Conviction Declaration** – you will be asked to complete a Criminal Convictions Declaration form either under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 or the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions and Exclusions) (Scotland) Order 2003. This will be discussed with you at interview and will be used to assist selection
- **Proof of Eligibility to Work in the UK – original ID along with a photocopy will be required to be verified.** Eligibility requirements are provided by the Home Office. *Please note that internal candidates will not be required to undergo this check*
- **Driving Licence/Information Form** – if you are applying for a position with us which requires you to drive we will ask to see your driving licence
- **Immigration and Asylum Check** – You are not required to bring any documentation to the interview, however, if you are successful you will need to provide original valid documentation during recruitment checks (e.g. ID card or Passport) to confirm that you are legally entitled to work and live in the UK. *(Please note that internal candidates will not be required to undergo this check)*

UNSUCCESSFUL FOLLOWING APPLICATION/SELECTION PROCESS

Applicants who are unsuccessful will be notified by email or telephone, on average, within 2 weeks after application closing date. Candidates unsuccessful at the interview stage will be notified by email from the chairperson of the interview panel, on average 1 week after interview.

Feedback

Those who have been unsuccessful at application/interview may request feedback from the chairperson of the interviewing panel and this will normally be given by telephone.

Complaints Procedure

South Ayrshire Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and will endeavour to ensure that no individual receives less favourable treatment. Accordingly, if you think you have been treated less favourably than other individuals or feel you have been the subject of discrimination during the recruitment process, you are entitled to complain and you should write to the Head of Employee and Customer Services, County Buildings, Ayr, KA7 1DR within 14 days of being advised of the outcome of your application.

RECOMMENDED CANDIDATE FOLLOWING SELECTION PROCESS

You will be notified by the interview panel chairperson directly by telephone or email, on average, 1 week after the interview. A conditional offer of employment will be made at this stage, subject to satisfactory completion of the following:

Online Health Questionnaire

An online 'Recommended Candidate Health Questionnaire' will be forwarded to our Occupational Health Services provider for review.

The purpose of the questionnaire is to establish whether there are any reasonable adjustments that require to be made prior to employment commencing. If you indicate you may have difficulty fulfilling the essential conditions of the post and/or will require reasonable adjustments to complete the post, you will be referred to Occupational Health.

Reference Checks

References will be obtained and scrutinised as part of our pre-employment checks. The purpose of references is to:

- provide a background employment history and valuable information
- assist in assessing performance in previous roles, personal qualities and characteristics
- help maintain a safer and more secure standard of recruitment

Disclosure Scotland

A Disclosure is a document containing impartial and confidential criminal history information held by the police and government departments which will be used by us to make safer recruitment decisions. For more information regarding these checks please refer to the Disclosure Scotland [website](#).

You may be expected to meet the cost of the relevant Disclosure Scotland check.

Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG)

We are committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expect all employees to share this commitment.

All roles involving contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults will undergo a number of pre-employment background checks including the relevant level of Disclosure Scotland check (basic, standard, enhanced or PVG membership) and professional registration check (e.g. SSSC).

Teachers are required to have two references available at the interview, and GTCS registration is checked.

If the post is considered Regulated Work with Children and Protected Adults, under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act, 2007, it is an offence to apply when barred from working with children or protected adults.

You will be required to join the PVG Scheme, or undergo a PVG Scheme Update check, and the satisfactory outcome of the check is a condition of employment by South Ayrshire Council. For further information on the PVG Scheme please refer to the Disclosure Scotland [website](#).

You may be expected to meet the cost of the above.

UNCONDITIONAL OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT

Upon satisfactory completion of all relevant pre-employment checks, an unconditional offer of employment will be made to you via email or letter. This will include your start date.

DATA PROTECTION

All information held by us on you will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

CANVASSING

Direct contact with elected members or employees of South Ayrshire Council in connection with an appointment within the Council will disqualify you from applying for that position or for any subsequent appointment offered.

Appendix 1

For guidance as to whom to approach for a reference please see the below table:

Your Employment Status	Reference 1	Reference 2
Currently employed	From current employer	From employer prior to current employer (if less than 5 years ago and the business still exists) OTHERWISE a character reference – school, university, voluntary organisation, NOT a family member or friend.
Not Currently employed	From most recent employer	From previous employer (if less than 5 years and the business still exists) OTHERWISE a character reference – school, university, voluntary organisation, NOT a family member or friend.
Never been employed	Character reference – school, university, voluntary organisation, professional, NOT a family member or friend.	Character reference – school, university, voluntary organisation, NOT a family member or friend.
Currently self-employed	From an organisation that can verify self-employment dates e.g. Inland Revenue records.	From previous employer (if self-employed for less than 5 years).
Currently employed by South Ayrshire Council	From immediate line manager	From another manager or work colleague within South Ayrshire Council

If you are unable to provide a reference from a previous employer, we will require you to obtain character references and these **cannot** be from family members, partners or friends.

Options for you to consider:

- Schools
- Colleagues
- Universities
- Voluntary Organisations
- Parent Helpers at School or after school activities

- Church
- Organisations you attend – hobbies etc.
- Family Doctor
- Professional (Police Officer, Justice of the Peace, Solicitor)