

Writing a good letter of application

Person Specification

This acts as selection criteria and gives an outline of the types of person and the characteristics required to do the job.

Essential (E):- without which candidate would be rejected
Desirable (D):- useful for choosing between two good candidates.

Please make sure, when completing your application form, you give clear examples of how you meet the essential and desirable criteria.

Attributes	Essential		Desirable	
		How Measured		How Measured
Experience	1. Demonstrable experience of working in a school environment is essential for this post.	1,2	4. Experience of delivering a curriculum for children with special educational needs including ASD	1,2
	2. Demonstrable experience of curriculum planning, delivering, monitoring and assessment for children with special educational needs.	1,2		
	3. Significant experience of working with students with special educational needs and who may have SEMH needs and/or may present with challenging behaviours	1,2		
Skills/Abilities	5. Able to support learning in Literacy and Numeracy at a relevant level (Entry Level 2)	1,2		
	6. Able to use ICT skills to support planning, teaching, recording information and communication with colleagues, parents and professionals	1,2		
	7. Able to contribute constructively to work effectively as a member of a team. Able to lead and give direction.	1,2		
	8. Self-motivated & initiative led in working with parents/ carers and the child's community within an agreed framework of policies and procedures.	1,2		
	9. Able to communicate at a range of levels e.g. with children, parents, other professionals, etc.	1,2		
	10. Able to keep accurate records and relate observations to records, planning and teaching.	1,2		
	11. Able to converse with ease with members of the public and provide effective help or advice in accurate and fluent spoken English	1,2		

Competencies	12. Able to demonstrate appropriate motivation to work with young people	1,2		
	13. Able to form appropriate relationships with young people	1,2		
	14. Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours	1,2		
	15. Appropriate attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline	1,2		
Equality Issues	16. Able to recognise and act upon common forms of discrimination. Understanding of impact of SEND on equality issues	1,2		
Specialist Knowledge	17. Demonstrable knowledge of how students learn	1,2	20. Team Teach trained.	1,2
	18. Understanding of positive approach to behaviour management	1,2		
	19. Demonstrable knowledge of safeguarding children procedures and processes	1,2		
Education and Training	21. Evidence of ongoing professional development	1,4	23. First Aid Practitioner	1,2
	22. HLTA qualification or equivalent qualification or experience.	1,2		
Other Requirements	24. Attendance at relevant staff and parent meetings and training	1,2		
	25. Hold specific area of responsibility within the school additional to working in the classroom.	1,2		

(1 = Application Form 2 = Interview, 3 = Test 4 = Proof of Qualification 5 = Practical Exercise)

Person specification example

When applying for a job in a school it is really important that you read the Job Description and the Person Specification document. Most adverts will request a letter of application which relates to the Person Specification. In a letter of application you have the opportunity to explain how you have the relevant experience, skills, knowledge, qualifications and competencies in order to get you to the next stage in the application process.

In the letter of application you need to address every point in the Person Specification. When shortlisting who to take to interview, the short listing panel will be looking for the evidence that you have addressed each of these points.

There is no fixed way to write a letter of application, but you need to make it as easy as possible for those who are shortlisting the applications to be able to find the evidence against each criteria in the Person Specification.

Some adverts have pre-set questions in the application form, to ensure you provide the relevant information. Some require you to write a separate letter of application. We recommend that you address each point in the person specification one at a time. We are happy if you do this in a numbered list.

Remember to write about your experience, knowledge, etc. and also to note the impact of this on your practice.

For example, for a job in a school there will always be something in the Person Specification about safeguarding.

In the sample Person Specification above, it states the following as essential criteria:

19. Demonstrable knowledge of safeguarding children procedures and processes

A good example answer may include some of the following:

19. I understand that safeguarding means Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. I undertake regular safeguarding training and I am familiar with the requirements in the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, including the changes in, I know and follow school procedures for reporting concerns to and following this up by reporting it on..... I regularly add entries to CPOMs and have had some face to face conversations about concerns as well. I know that we have to assume it could happen here and therefore I

The answer is not complete - this is on purpose so that if you apply, you can personalise the answer.

Other hints and tips:

- Draft your letter of application in Word – use the spelling and punctuation check (UK English not US English).
- Read over your letter to make sure it makes sense.
- Ask a friend or colleague to read over it as well.