

15 Tips for Completing an Application Form

We often ask candidates to complete an application form, rather than just send in a CV. It is particularly common in the public sector and makes applications easier to process. It makes sure we have the same information from all applicants.

Here are 15 tips for completing an application form successfully:

1. Ensure you plan to complete, review, and return your application in time for the closing date. It is a common error to rush completion the night before a deadline.
2. It is useful to make a copy or download a few applications so you can practice filling it out before making a final copy.
3. Read and follow the instructions carefully. Always take a few minutes to review the entire application before starting.
4. Carefully read all supporting documents, such as the full job description or person specification before you start the application form.
5. We would recommend where possible that you fill in an application form electronically, keeping the font size and spacing consistent. If you are not able to do this then your application may be handwritten, but it should be completed as neatly as possible. In both instances, make sure that the tense is consistent.
6. If there are questions that do not apply to you, simply respond with 'not applicable' or 'n/a'. Don't leave any blanks.
7. List your jobs in reverse chronological order or by job title (unless stated otherwise).

8. When describing your responsibilities and/or achievements in your current and past roles, bear in mind the skills the employer is seeking for that particular role. Try and relate your experience to the requirements from the person specification if you have one.
9. Clearly demonstrate your competences (key performance indicators) and how you have contributed to productivity and/or profitability of the organisation. They provide quantifiable and measurable evidence. They also suggest potential for the future. Use your achievements to *substantiate* what you say are your key skills and experience.
10. You may be required to complete a personal statement in support of your application, usually giving your reasons for applying and information relevant to the job specification, such as your knowledge, skills and experience supported by examples. This is a crucial and important part of the application form, and each point should be addressed, giving clear short paragraphs identifying how your experience meets the criteria from the person specification.
11. Consider whether a question is closed, asking for specific information, or whether it is open, and you can decide the direction of your response. There is often a word limit attached to the answer, and employers will be looking for a clear, succinct reply.
12. When applying for roles you should always state clearly why you are interested in the organisation, for example by linking the organisation to something personal to you, something topical which fuels your interest or the fact that you are interested in a particular project they run.
13. Proof read your application before submitting it, checking for any spelling or grammar errors, which may not be picked up by an automatic spellchecker.

14. It is a good idea to also ask a friend or relative to proof read your application for you. They may pick up things you miss!

15. Keep copies of your applications for future reference or to avoid making similar errors if an application is poorly received and familiarise yourself prior to interview.

We respect your privacy and will only use your personal information fairly and lawfully. To find out how we handle your personal information please read the Privacy Notice on our website at <http://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/core-privacy-notice>.

Best of luck,

The Recruitment Team