

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

GUIDANCE NOTES

These notes are intended to help you complete the application form.

The Council seeks to ensure that the right candidate is appointed for each post and applications are treated in a fair and consistent manner.

The application form is in two parts; part one is submitted to the selection panel for use in the selection process. Part two is removed prior to the selection process and is used for administrative and monitoring purposes only.

Please ensure you complete all sections of the form in sufficient detail. The information you provide is used to assess you against the criteria detailed in the Person Specification. If little or no information is provided, it will not be possible to assess suitability and progression to short-list for interview will be unlikely.

If you require the application form and these guidance notes in an alternative format, please contact Xentrall Recruitment Services on 01642 526992 or via email: recruitment@xentrall.org.uk.

General Points

- If you are applying for more than one post, please complete a separate application form for each post.
- Complete all sections as fully as possible.
- Return your application on or before the closing date. Applications received after the closing date will not be submitted for short-listing.
- Retain a copy of your application; it will be useful to refer to for preparation if you are short-listed for interview.
- All job offers are conditional and subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks including references, DBS check (if applicable), proof of ID, medical clearance and qualifications (if applicable).
- The Council's Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy statement is included with these guidance notes.

COMPLETING PART ONE

Part one is submitted to the selection panel for short-listing.

Complete the post applied for, post number, name and contact details. We will contact you via email throughout the recruitment process. Please check your junk/spam folders and add us to your safe senders list.

Current / most recent employment

Provide details of your current post, including your current salary and the period of notice you are required to give. If you are unemployed at the time of applying, please indicate this here.

Previous employment

If you have any additional current posts, please provide details of these in this section.

If the post requires a DBS certificate, please provide details of your employment history since you left school, college or university and ensure you include ALL previous Local Government employment.

If the post does not require a DBS certificate, please provide details of your employment history for the previous five years, plus ALL previous Local Government employment.

Include voluntary work and account for any gaps in employment e.g. career break, unemployed.

Qualifications

Provide details of your education and the qualifications you have achieved. We will request sight of original certificates and take copies if you are offered the post.

Non-qualification courses and further training

Provide details of any formal, informal or on the job training you have received which you consider to be relevant to the post.

Professional membership

Provide details of membership of professional / technical bodies e.g. Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and answer the questions on conditions and restrictions. We will request evidence of membership if you are offered the post.

Driving Ability

If the post requires a specific type of licence this will be indicated on the Person Specification and you will be required to produce the original documentation if you are offered the post.

Personal Statement

Provide information on why you are suitable for the post. The Person Specification details the essential and desirable criteria. You are required to provide evidence on your application for each of the criteria.

The required essential and desirable criteria are detailed in the Person Specification. Provide evidence against each of the criteria in your personal statement e.g. ability to work successfully as part of a team – provide an example of when you did this, including what you did and how you did it.

Consider what you have done previously and include examples from different environments e.g. voluntary or paid work, things you have done in the home, at school or college, a hobby or other interest outside of work.

Assumptions will not be made about your experience and knowledge, skills or personal attributes. You must provide sufficient detail in this section to cover how you meet the criteria and why you are suitable for the post.

COMPLETING PART ONE – CONTINUED

References

Provide full contact details for two independent referees. One must be your current or most recent employer and the second should be a previous employer or someone who can provide objective information about you that is relevant to the post. Relatives and close friends will not be accepted.

If you have previously been employed by the Council, a reference will be requested from your previous line manager or the HR Team, even if not identified as a referee.

If you are a school or college leaver you could ask your tutor or head teacher to provide a reference.

Ensure you advise the referees that you have given their name.

References may be requested prior to interview, depending on the type of post e.g. safeguarding role.

Disclosure Information

You should only complete this section if the post requires a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

The Council is committed to the principle of making appointments on merit. When considering an applicant with a criminal record the Council will take into account the relevance of the conviction to the post being applied for.

The Council has adopted a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders which is included in these guidance notes.

If the post does require a DBS check, you should disclose any convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013) by SI 2013 1198.

If you have registered with the DBS update service, please indicate the level and workforce as we will use the service as part of our pre-employment checks.

Relationships

We need to know if you are related to an Elected Member or Senior Officer of the Council. This is to ensure you are neither disadvantaged nor favoured in your application.

You must not canvass either an Elected Member or Council employee to gain employment. This will disqualify your application.

We also need to know if you are directly or indirectly involved with other businesses, agencies or organisations which could be deemed to conflict with the post you are applying for. Again, this is to ensure you are neither disadvantaged nor favoured in your application.

Failure to declare the above relationships may result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

COMPLETING PART TWO

Part two is for monitoring purposes only and is not disclosed to the selection panel.

Equal Opportunities

As an equal opportunities employer, the Council welcomes applications from all sections of the community, regardless of gender or gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion or belief, social origin, pregnancy and maternity.

The information we gather on the Recruitment Equality Monitoring form will be used only to monitor the diversity of applicants, in line with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Disability

The Council is a Disability Confident Employer and undertakes to interview any applicant who declares a disability and who meets the essential (minimum) criteria for the job.

The information you provide in this section is used for the following purposes (where relevant):

- to take positive action in supporting employment for disabled people;
- to establish whether we need to make adjustments to enable you to take part in the selection process;
- to establish whether you will be able to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the work concerned;
- to establish that you have a disability where this is an occupational requirement.

Please refer to Section 60 of the Equality Act 2010 and to the information provided via the link below regarding medical conditions which automatically qualify individuals as having a disability.

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=5847>

Eligibility to Work in the United Kingdom

To ensure the Council complies with legislation, you will be required to provide documentary evidence showing you are entitled to work in the UK e.g. a passport that shows you are a British citizen or a full birth or adoption certificate which includes the name(s) of at least one parent together with an official document issued by an employer or Government Agency containing your name and National Insurance number.

If your Right to Work is subject to any restrictions e.g. you have a Work Permit, you should provide full details, including any expiry dates.

Data Protection Information

The Council is committed to keeping your data and privacy safe – we take protecting the data of all applicants very seriously. Further information on the Council's privacy statements relating to the retention and processing of information you provide as part of the application process is contained in the privacy statements published on the Council's website.

By applying for a job, the Council will undertake necessary checks to assist with the recruitment process including contacting referees, checking employment status and eligibility to work in line with national guidance and statutory requirements. This information will also be used as required should an applicant be employed.

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL THE RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

Policy Statement

Introduction

1. Darlington Borough Council recognises the importance of ensuring equality of opportunity in its employment practices and is committed to eliminating unfair discrimination when employing people with criminal records. The Council's Equality Policy supports this commitment.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

2. This Act provides that anyone who has been convicted of a criminal offence and who is not convicted of a further offence during the specified period becomes a 'rehabilitation person' and his/her conviction becomes spent.
3. This means that the conviction does not have to be declared when applying for a job. The rehabilitation period depends on the sentence and runs from the date of conviction. A conviction resulting in a prison sentence of more than 30 months can never become spent.
4. Under the Act, a spent conviction, or failure to disclose a spent conviction or any circumstances connected with it, is not a proper ground for dismissing or excluding a person from employment.
5. Rehabilitation periods for community orders and custodial sentences comprise the period of the sentence plus an additional "buffer" period, rather than all rehabilitation periods starting from the date of conviction. For example, for a sentence of six months or less, the current rehabilitation period of seven years from date of conviction becomes the period of sentence plus a buffer period of two years.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Order 1975

6. There are some exceptions to the Act detailed in the Exceptions Order of 1975, which, broadly relate to work with children, sick, elderly or disabled people and the administration of the law. Where an exception applies an individual must, if asked, disclose all convictions, including spent ones.

Disclosure

7. Before asking a person to make an application for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, the Council will ensure that they are entitled to ask that person to reveal their conviction history in accordance with the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 which describes occupations that are known as the exceptions to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. For posts covered by the Exceptions Order, Darlington Borough Council will be able to access information regarding both spent and not spent information in addition to information regarding the applicants suitability for work with children, vulnerable people and in excepted professions.

Standard checks – To be eligible for a standard level DBS check the position must be included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

Enhanced checks – To be eligible for an enhanced level DBS check, the position must be included in both the ROA Exceptions Order and in Police Act Regulations.

Enhanced checks with children's and/or adults' barred list check(s) – To be eligible to request a check of the children's or adults' barred lists, the position must meet the new definition of regulated activity. There are a small number of other positions for which you can also request list checks.

Appointment Process

8. Darlington Borough Council is committed to the principle of making appointments on merit and will focus on a person's abilities, skills, experience and qualifications. When considering an applicant with a criminal record the Council will consider the relevance of the convictions to the job for which the person is applying. In considering this relevance the Council will explore:
 - (a) the circumstances leading up to an offence
 - (b) whether the individual has committed repeat offences
 - (c) the nature and seriousness of the offence
 - (d) the length of time since the offence took place
 - (e) the nature of the work in which the individual will be involved, including their exposure to money, property and vulnerable people
 - (f) the extent to which the person will be supervised
 - (g) the individual's attempts not to re-offend
 - (h) the potential risks associated with employing the person in the post
9. The Council does not necessarily see a criminal record as a bar to employment. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offence.

Ensuring the Appropriate Use of Disclosure

10. The Council will make it clear on the Application for Employment where a post is subject to the provisions of the Exceptions Order and where there is a requirement to declare spent convictions, a standard or enhanced disclosure will be sought. In no other circumstances will questions relating to spent convictions be asked.
11. The Council will only request a Disclosure where it is considered both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned.

Failure to disclose a criminal record

12. Failure to disclose unspent and/or spent convictions when required on the Application for Employment will be considered a serious matter and may lead to an offer of employment being withdrawn, disciplinary action or even dismissal. However, the matter will be discussed with the applicant/employee prior to any decisions being made.

Confidentiality

13. Any information requested and provided regarding criminal records will be treated confidentially and with discretion. Access to criminal record information will be on a need-to-know basis and information will be stored confidentially and in accordance with the Data Protection Act and Disclosure guidance.

Communication of this Policy

14. The Council will undertake to ensure that key employees receive appropriate training about their personal roles and responsibilities in this area. In addition specific training will be provided on assessing the risks associated with employing those with criminal records, identifying safeguards and making balanced objective judgements.
15. All job applicants, where Disclosure is required, will receive a copy of this policy with the information pack sent out with the Application for Employment.