

Getting the most out of your application form - your application and our recruitment process

Jean Lambert MEP is working towards equal opportunities for all, both in terms of political policies and as an employer. All staff and volunteers should work to and promote this policy.

The information you provide in your application form is the only information Jean Lambert's Office will use when deciding whether or not you will be short-listed for an interview. If you don't mention things on the form we cannot consider them - even if we know you.

Your application form is therefore very important and the following advice is designed to help you complete it as effectively as possible. We would suggest you read this through before you begin working on your form.

1. Filling in the form

Read the job information we have sent you very carefully

Job Information
Every vacancy is based on a *Job Description* which lists the main duties of the post, and a *Person Specification* which describes the skills, experience, knowledge and personal attributes we are looking for. Please look at this carefully so that you know what the job involves and the range of experience required.

Consider all the relevant experience you have gained and tell us about it

Filling in the application form

Decisions about who will be selected for interview will be based on the information you give in the application form (see Short-listing below).

Therefore, application forms should be filled in as completely as possible so that we can consider all the candidates on the same basis. Please do not include any additional information (eg. CV, references etc) unless this is specifically asked for on the form. Any additional information other than continuation sheets which are stated as acceptable on the form will be disregarded. Note any word limits.

Look carefully at the application form; ask yourself, why you are interested in the job?

Think about your experience.

How can you show that you have the skills, knowledge, experience, qualifications and personal attributes listed in the Person Specification to do the job?

Explaining past and present hobbies or interests to someone else can help you uncover 'hidden skills' that you take for granted. Unpaid work and voluntary work can be as important as paid work.

Make sure that your application relates entirely to the job you are applying for; don't copy the same form for a series of different jobs.

The most important thing is to tell us - we are unable to guess or make assumptions.

Do a rough draft first

Plan out your answers in rough first to avoid mistakes and repetitions.

Check that all the dates are correct and in the right order.

Complete the form

Make sure you complete the form clearly.

If you choose to write it by hand please make sure that your writing can be easily read as the short-listing panel may have many forms to read.

If you use any additional sheets please ensure you follow the instructions in the form about where additional sheets can be used and on how to mark those sheets as belonging to your form.

Send us your form, keeping a copy for yourself The general information about the post will state what date you should return your form by. Late forms will not be accepted. Remember to keep a copy for yourself.

2. Short-listing - How we will make decisions

Short-listing is based on the experience, qualifications/training and personal attributes you show in your form and how it relates to the Person Specification **Scoring and judging your application**

After closing date all the applications are read carefully to see how each person's experience, qualifications/training and personal attributes relates to the Person Specification. The decision on who to shortlist is based on looking at who meets the essential requirements. Using a fair marking system the short-listing panel will look at the criteria listed as being shown on the application form and will give you a rating based on the information in your form. Generally speaking, desirable criteria are only considered if a large number of people meet all the essential criteria.

It is therefore a good idea to make your application form follow the Person Specification as much as this is possible.

Show how you meet the criteria

You may need to think about how you can prove you have certain experience, skills, knowledge etc, rather than just stating this. It can be useful to use examples or to relate to previous experience. So for example if the Person Specification asks for bookkeeping skills you should not just say that you have them, but add that this was a part of your previous work and give more details and information about this work.

3. Interviewing

If you are selected for interview, you will be contacted and given full details of the interview process. You may be asked to complete tasks or practical tests as part of the selection process. If this is the case, you will be given details before the interview.

The whole selection process is established to judge each candidate against the Person Specification. Therefore if you are asked certain questions or set tasks you should not assume that these will form part of the job if successful.

Set questions are asked at interview and the panel take notes

The interview panel is normally made up of 3 or 4 people who will ask the same questions of each candidate covering key aspects of the job. The questions are intended to allow you to expand on your application and to show the panel how far you meet the requirements of the post.

Therefore before the interview it is a good idea to think about the types of questions you would ask someone applying for this post - remembering to relate them to the Person Specification.

The panel has to keep a record of their assessment of each candidate so that the reasons for their decisions are clear, consistent and justifiable. You should not, therefore, be worried about the panel taking notes. You will have the opportunity to ask questions about the job, conditions of service etc.