

Applying for a job at HDC – Guidance Notes for Candidates

Thank you for your interest in working at Huntingdonshire District Council. Below you will find some tips about completing our application form and what to expect at each stage of the process.

If you have any questions at all on anything we have not mentioned below, please do email the recruitment team at recruitment@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

The application process

Unfortunately, it is not possible to interview everyone who applies for one of our jobs. Your application form is the only means we have to assess your capability and potential against the demands of the role and the information you therefore include in your application form will be used to draw up a shortlist for the next stage of selection.

The application form is your opportunity to showcase your experience and skill set alongside the knowledge, skills and experience that are detailed in the job description.

The job description lists the main duties and responsibilities for the post as well as setting out the experience, skills, abilities and qualifications we are looking for.

Sometimes these requirements are split into two categories:

- Essential criteria – these are characteristics that are seen as essential to the job. A candidate that does not have these will not be able to carry out the job and will not be shortlisted for interview.
- Desirable criteria – these may be used to help distinguish between multiple candidates when there are a number of good applicants.

Your application will be assessed against the criteria contained within the job description. Please note that CVs will not be accepted unless otherwise stated as it is our policy for applications to be submitted via our application form.

A copy of your application will be held in line with our data privacy statement and only used for recruitment purposes and in making a decision on the suitability of the role.

Additional information on the application form

Please ensure you complete all the fields on the application form, including your contact details, current and previous employment (paid and voluntary) and outline any employment gaps and what you were doing during this time, be it studying, career break or job seeking. Some roles require security checks so it is important

that, in order to complete any checks at offer stage, we have full details of the past 3 years.

We also ask for employment status as we are only able to employ individuals who already hold valid right to work documentation for the UK. We are not able to provide any visa sponsorship. The fields on criminal convictions, relationships, disabilities and any continuous service are all important too, so please ensure that these are completed.

Criminal convictions

Please answer the questions about cautions, convictions, reprimands and final warnings. If your conviction has become 'Spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, you do not need to tell us about it unless you are applying for a job which is exempt, in which case you must enter the details. If you have any convictions which are 'Unspent', please tell us about them, however minor. You should be assured that declaring an offence will not necessarily bar you from employment with Huntingdonshire District Council. The Council is committed to the rehabilitation of ex-offenders back into the workplace; however, it is essential to base decisions on a full and accurate application.

Disability guidance

At HDC we are committed to being a Disability Confident employer and ensuring disability inclusive workplace is available for all and this scheme demonstrates our commitment to positive action to ensure people with disabilities are treated fairly and have access to the same opportunities as people without disabilities. We wish to make it clear that we welcome applications from all candidates and that we recruit in line with the abilities sought for each role with no barriers or discrimination. The scheme also shows existing employees that we value their contribution and will continue to treat them fairly should they require disability support at any point during their employment with us.

We guarantee an interview to anyone disclosing a disability whose application meets the essential minimum requirements for the job. We will also make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the individual needs of candidates in order for them to participate fully in the interview and undertake employment with us.

Right to work

All applicants to HDC must be already in receipt of valid right to work documentation in order to take up employment with us in line with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 your visa is time limited or you hold right to work documentation which is not a UK passport, please ensure that you tell us about this in your supporting statement so we can be sure that any position you are offered is in line

with our statutory and legal obligations. Please note that HDC is unable to provide sponsorship to candidates who do not currently have the right to work in the UK.

Tips

- You can save your application and make amendments before submitting it. This helps to avoid making mistakes and allows you to organise your application and consider if anything is missing.
- Make sure your application relates to the specific job that you are applying for and that you have tailored the “supporting statement” box to the key deliverables and skills, knowledge and experience we are seeking (this will be in the job description so it’s a good idea to have that open whilst you complete the form). Give specific examples where possible or relate these to the information in the job description. Your examples can be from work, school or outside interests if they are relevant to what we are seeking.
- When you have finished your application, proofread it and check for any errors or omissions.
- Make sure your application form is submitted by the closing date.
- If you are copying and pasting from a Word document into your online application, you may lose any formatting you have done. You may wish to consider formatting your text once it has been pasted into your application. This includes things like bullet points, underlining etc.

What happens next?

Your completed application form will be used to decide whether or not you progress to the next stage of the selection process. No assumptions will be made about your experience. It is vital that you have told us how you meet the selection criteria and that you have completed each of the boxes on the application form in order for us to shortlist against your experience, skills, qualifications and knowledge.

We will notify you when your application is received and update you on the status of your application throughout the recruitment process. If you would like further feedback at any stage, please contact us via recruitment@huntingdonshire.gov.uk. Candidates who are interviewed and unsuccessful will have individual feedback provided to them. At times when there is a high volume of applications, it is not possible to give individual feedback to all candidates who were not shortlisted for interview stage.

If you are not successful in your application, please do not be discouraged from applying for other jobs with the Council. Your skills and experience may be more suitable to another vacancy.

Interview stage

- **If selected, you will receive an email inviting you to interview.** Please do confirm acceptance to any email or Teams invite. If you are no longer able to make the interview or have had a change of circumstances, please do let us know and we will inform the Hiring Manager. If possible, we will look for alternative dates to accommodate you if you cannot make the original date.
- **Prepare for your interview.** Think about the questions you might be asked and prepare some things to say in reply. Remember to keep it concise and relevant. There are great interview tips on the internet.
- **Do some homework – find out more about us.** No-one is expecting you to know everything, but if you're asked "what do you know about us?" have a couple of lines prepared – it shows you're interested and using your initiative. Our website is a great place to start.
- **Try to relax.** This is your opportunity to decide if this role is right for you as well as our chance to find out about you. Try to relax and think about what you're saying, have a couple of questions ready to ask to us.
- **Be professional.** If you're unsure of where you're going, do a trial run the day before – it'll take the stress out of the interview day. Leave extra early just in case the traffic's bad or the bus doesn't turn up. Not sure what the dress code is? Always play safe and go smart rather than casual. Even a Teams interview should be conducted in a professional manner – but don't worry about bad WiFi – we understand that technical hiccups occur.
- **Two-way process.** Remember that the interview is a two-way process, don't be afraid to ask us questions and challenge our thinking.

We will then be in touch as soon as all interviews have concluded with either an offer or individual feedback should you not be made an offer at this stage.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding your application or our process please do not hesitate to get in touch with the recruitment team via recruitment@huntingdonshire.gov.uk. We wish you the best of luck in applying and thank you for considering a career with Huntingdonshire District Council.