

# Guidance Notes for Applicants



The following information is designed to assist you in your application for this post.  
**PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY.**

## SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING

This College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

These guidance notes are based on the DfE's Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment guidance 2007 which sets out the responsibilities of employers in FE, schools, and local authorities in England with regards safeguarding and protecting.

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The College has a Single Equality Scheme and a Recruitment and Selection Policy. The aim of these policies is to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly and are appointed solely on their suitability for the post irrespective of gender, marital status or domestic responsibilities, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, disability/learning difficulties, sexuality, unrelated criminal conviction or whether they wish to work full or part time. All stages of the recruitment process are monitored to check that unfair discrimination is not taking place. We want to try and make sure that everyone applying for a job with us has a fair chance and this form is the first stage in the recruitment process, which may lead to a possible job offer. It is therefore very important that you complete all sections of the Application Form as clearly and fully as possible.

We are required to monitor the profile of our staff as part of our duties under The Equality Act. For this reason, we collect details of your age, gender identity, marital or civil partnership status, ethnicity, disability status, sexual orientation and religion or belief on the first and second pages of the Application Form. This means that before applications are short listed, the two front pages can be detached so that no personal information about the applicant is available to the panel. For this reason we ask that you **DO NOT** include your name on your supporting statement, simply attach it securely to your Application Form. This will be done automatically if you apply online.

## THE APPLICATION FORM

*All applicants are required to complete the College's Application Form and submit a supporting statement; **CVs are not accepted** and will be discarded at the beginning of the shortlisting process.*

We want you to have the best chance of success so we will give you information about how to complete your Application Form and you are advised to read it carefully before you begin completing your form. If after reading the information you feel you would like some advice or guidance about completing the Application Form then you should contact the HR Team on 01254 354023.

## HOW TO COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION FORM

Along with your Application Form you can also download a Job Description, a Person Specification and any other essential information about the job. This information should help you to decide if you want to apply for the job. It will also help you to fill in your Application Form.

**Remember that we can only decide who we should interview based on information provided in the Application Form so it is very important that you fill it in properly.**

## Job Descriptions

The Job Description will form part of the contract of employment of the person appointed to this post. You should note, however, that such documents reflect the position at the present time only, and may be changed in job content, or may require the post holder to undertake other duties, at any of the College's sites, provided that such changes are appropriate to the employee's remuneration and status.

## Person Specification

The Person Specification is very important as it tells you what skills, abilities, qualifications and experience you will need to be able to do the job. We decide who to invite for an interview by comparing what you tell us in your Application Form with what we have asked for in the Person Specification. It is therefore vital that you clearly explain how your skills and experience match the requirements outlined in the person specification.

On the Person Specification we indicate those criteria which are:

ESSENTIAL - those minimum skills, qualifications or experience requirements which you must have in order to do the job, or DESIRABLE - these are not essential, but are additional to the minimum requirement to do the job.

In the event that all the applicants meet the essential criteria, the Selection Panel may use the desirable criteria to assess and decide which applicants further meet the additional requirements of the job, and should be invited for an interview.

Those applicants who **do not meet the essential criteria will not be shortlisted or considered under the desirable criteria**. It is important, therefore to make sure that in your application you clearly show how your experience and skills meet each item on the Person Specification because we can only shortlist you for interview if you show you meet the requirements.

In particular, remember that we cannot make assumptions based on what you say, you need to be specific. For example, if one of the essential criteria is that you have experience of Information Systems and you tell us in your career history that you have worked in a library, we cannot assume from that alone that you have worked with Information Systems. You would have to say something more in your **letter in support of your application**, e.g. 'I worked in a library where I used their Information System on a daily basis to track the lending and returning of books'.

## Remember

- Read all the information sent to you.
- Complete all the sections on the Application Form.  
We are required by law to ask certain questions and gather certain information.
- Pay special attention to the Person Specification.  
Read this section carefully and decide how you think your skills, qualifications and experience (as appropriate) match or meet those requirements.
- Give brief examples.  
It is not enough to make statements, you need to demonstrate how you meet the criteria, (for example if the job advertised is for a Lecturer Assessor - do not simply state that you have been a Lecturer Assessor for 10 years - you need to tell us about your skills in this role and the type of work you have undertaken).
- Don't include your name on your supporting statement.

It is always a good idea to write your application out in draft form first, correcting any mistakes, or including anything which you may have missed out. If possible ask someone (family or friend) to go over your Application Form with you as a double check to ensure you have completed the form correctly. If you are applying online, it may be useful for you to prepare and check your supporting statement in a word processed document and copy and paste this into the on-line application.

As an educational establishment, committed to raising standards and the achievement of excellence, we expect candidates to submit professional, accurate and considered applications, appropriate to the type and level of the post. We reserve the right to reject applications that are generally of a poor standard at the short listing stage, whether or not individuals meet the criteria in the Person Specification. If you are completing the Application Form by hand, please ensure that your handwriting is clear and in legible print, in either black or blue ink.

**Do not opt for a quick fix - CVs are not acceptable - you must complete our Application Form.**

If you would like to present your application in another format, such as recorded onto a tape please contact the HR Department on 01254 354159 so that this can be arranged.

## REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills, and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, and experience. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from employment with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

In line with legislation, the College will request a Disclosure certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (formerly the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) certificate) after a provisional offer of employment is made to an applicant. After the relevant checks and clearance have been made by the DBS, the original Disclosure will then be issued to the individual.

The nature of our establishment allows posts to be exempted from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and applicants are required to disclose details of **any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings**. The DBS/CRB Code of Practice and explanatory guide is available from the HR team on request or alternatively from <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/agencies-public-bodies/dbs/dbs-checking-service-guidance/cop>. Also available under the applicant information of the ACCROSS job vacancy website, is further information regarding spent and unspent convictions, along with a list of offences that will always be disclosed on a DBS certificate.

In addition, dependent on the role for which you are applying, if the post is deemed to be of regulated activity, the college may also seek a check of the **DBS Barred List** (formerly List 99/ISA Barred List). It is against the law for employers to employ someone or allow them to volunteer in this kind of work if they are on one of the barred lists. Similarly, if someone applies for a position at the college knowing that they are on one of the barred lists for working with young people or vulnerable adults, the college has a duty to refer that information to the DBS.

**A criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us.** Further information is available in our 'Statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders'. A copy of this is available on request from the HR team or is available to download from [www.accross.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.accross.ac.uk/jobs).

## DBS - PRIVACY FOR TRANSGENDER APPLICANTS

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) offers a confidential checking process to protect the privacy of applicants who have undergone gender reassignment. This process provides applicants with the opportunity not to reveal their previous name(s) and / or gender to their employer, or other organisation, when applying for a DBS check.

The DBS are fully committed to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination on grounds of gender identity and this process ensures that a transgender person's application is dealt with sensitively and without the need to disclose previous names to the employer, whilst maintaining the integrity of their service.

The DBS provide a designated point of contact for transgender applicants, dedicating a small resource to deal with any queries that are raised, and provide help and support throughout the process. They are also solely responsible for contacting the applicant if further information is required.

If an applicant has a conviction under their previous details, it will show on a completed check. If a Certificate is going to show any personal details that the applicant may not wish to disclose, the applicant will be informed of this and they will have the opportunity to withdraw the application.

For further information, please visit the applicant section of the DBS website [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs). Anyone wishing to use the process may contact the DBS Sensitive Line directly on 0151 676 1452. Alternatively, the DBS have a dedicated email address for enquiries regarding transgender applications, to email the DBS Sensitive Applications Team their address is: [sensitive@dbs.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sensitive@dbs.gsi.gov.uk)

## POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

We are committed to the employment and career development of people with disabilities. To demonstrate our commitment, we use the Disability Symbol which is awarded by the Jobcentre Plus. As a symbol user, we guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum essential criteria for the post.

If you have a disability, there are a number of ways in which we can help you if you need it, from giving assistance with completing the Application Form, allowing you to make an application in another format, making adjustments to our arrangements for interview or selection tasks if appropriate and making adjustments to the job where reasonable. Please tell us about any help that you may need using the relevant section on the Equal Opportunities part of the Application Form or by attaching a supporting letter and returning it with your application.

## REFERENCES

You must supply the names and contact details of two people who can supply a work reference for you. At least one should be your **current employer, or last employer** if unemployed. We cannot accept references from friends or relatives. If you have previously worked with children or young people, we are required to request a reference from that employer. Please note we cannot seek references from a member of college staff involved in the selection process for the post for which you are applying.

**The College will request references prior to interview in order to comply with Safeguarding and Protecting Young People and Vulnerable Adults Legislation.**

## APPOINTMENT

Should you be offered a post with the College you will receive an offer letter. The offer letter you receive is conditional. This means that certain conditions have to be met before the offer can be confirmed, including receipt of two references deemed satisfactory by the College, DBS checks, confirmation of your qualifications, confirmation of your right to work in the UK and medical clearance. **The College cannot allow you to start employment with us until the relevant checks have been carried out and deemed satisfactory.**

## MEDICAL CLEARANCE

Once an offer of employment has been made, all applicants are asked to complete a medical questionnaire. The College's Occupational Health Advisor will then carry out a medical assessment on our behalf.

Some employees will then be asked to attend a meeting with the Occupational Health Advisor. The purpose of the screening is to establish from a medical perspective:

- Whether you are likely to be able to perform the full duties of the post
- Whether some reasonable adjustments will be necessary to make the post more suitable for you and what these may be
- Whether there is a substantial part of the job that makes the post totally unsuitable for you
- Whether your absence from work history is acceptable (showing low levels of absence or absence connected with one-off medical problems)
- Whether your absence history is linked to a disability and needs to be considered in terms of reasonable adjustments that might be considered to meet an acceptable target
- Whether you have a history of poor attendance with no underlying medical reason making you potentially an unreliable appointment in terms of your attendance at work

The College believes in providing an efficient and effective service to our learners and this is adversely affected by high levels of absence amongst our staff. In particular the College does not wish to employ individuals who have a poor history of attendance at work where there is no underlying medical reason for their absence record.

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If you consider that your application has not been dealt with fairly and if you wish to complain about your treatment, you should contact the HR Manager on 01254 354022.

## **FINALLY**

*Make sure you return your Application Form BEFORE the closing date.* Failure to do this may mean your application is rejected. We are unable to write to you to acknowledging receipt of your application, however if you wish to telephone us on 01254 354023 we will confirm whether or not we have received it. If you have not heard from us within 3 weeks of the closing date please assume that on this occasion you have not been successful.

**Good luck with your application.**