

## **Application Forms**

Many employers ask applicants to fill out a standard application form rather than send in their CV. Application forms are useful from an organisation's perspective because they ensure that all applicants provide exactly the same information. This helps the organisation to objectively short-list the applicants with the relevant skills and experience for the role.

### **Filling out an application form**

- Follow the instructions on the form. If you don't, the employer will probably stop reading. If it says write in black ink or in block capitals, do so!
- You won't need a covering letter if there is a section on the application form where you can provide additional info such as why you want to work for them. If there isn't an additional info section, you could include a covering letter explaining why you want to work for the organisation and what skills and experience you can bring to the job
- Photocopy the original form and do a rough version. When you come to fill in the real form you'll need to get it right first time.
- Write neatly. If your handwriting is difficult to read you could use block capitals or get it typed, do not cross out or use tippex.
- Use black ink unless asked otherwise. Black ink is easier to read if the employer photocopies it.
- Keep the original form clean and tidy.
- Use block capitals for personal details
- Spelling or grammatical errors are some of the most common reasons for getting rejected. Ask someone to check over the form before sending.
- Photocopy the form before sending it off. If you get an interview you'll want to remind yourself what you wrote.
- Make sure you get education and work history dates right, so it all makes sense. If the boxes don't give you enough space to put all you need into them, continue on a separate sheet. Put your name on this sheet and attach it to the main form

- Read the questions carefully to make sure you understand exactly what the employer is looking for. It will give you an idea if you refer back to the job description and person specification
- Look out for multiple questions within one question and make sure you answer all aspects of the question
- Use a range of examples from your work and personal history – this shows you're a well-rounded person with varied experience
- Watch out when cutting and pasting from previous application forms. The emphasis of the questions and the way you presented yourself might have been slightly different. The employer may be confused by your answer or able to tell you've cut and pasted it and will not be impressed.
- Fill in every part of the form. If a section doesn't apply to you, write N/A (not applicable) in the box – this shows you've considered it and haven't just forgotten.
- Use active language (verbs rather than nouns), short sentences and short words. Don't waffle or use too much jargon.
- Don't forget to sign the form!

