

Candidate Guide to Completing the Application Form

This guide is intended to help you complete the application form clearly, accurately and in full. It explains what information is required, how to present your experience effectively, and the key checks to complete before submission. Taking time to prepare your application carefully will help you present your suitability for the role as clearly as possible.

1. Preparing to complete the form

Before you begin, it is helpful to gather all of the information you may need in one place. This will make the form easier to complete and reduce the risk of missing important details.

- Read the full application form together with the job description, person specification and any supporting candidate information.
- Have your personal details ready, including your full address, Eircode, contact telephone number and email address.
- Prepare details of your education, qualifications and any formal or non-formal learning completed in recent years.
- List your employment history in reverse chronological order, starting with your current or most recent role.
- Think in advance about examples that show how you meet the competencies listed in the form.
- Contact your referees before submitting your application to confirm that they are willing to act on your behalf.
- Allow enough time to review the form fully before the closing date.

2. What the application form covers

The application form is designed to gather a full picture of your qualifications, experience and suitability for the role. You should complete each section carefully and make sure the information you provide is clear, accurate and relevant.

- **Personal details:** your name, contact information and confirmation of your eligibility to work in the Republic of Ireland.
- **Education and qualifications:** schools, colleges, awards and any professional or other learning completed in recent years.
- **Information technology skills:** your level of experience with the software and systems listed on the form.
- **Employment history:** your current and previous roles, dates of employment, duties, and reasons for leaving.
- **Competencies and key achievements:** written examples showing how your experience matches the role requirements.
- **References:** contact details for two referees who can comment on your work and experience.
- **Declarations:** sections relating to safeguarding, conflicts of interest, data protection

and your final declaration.

3. Completing the form effectively

When completing the form, focus on being clear, factual and relevant. The aim is to help the recruitment panel understand your experience and how it relates to the requirements of the role.

- Complete every section that applies to you and do not leave required sections blank.
- Write in plain, professional language and keep your answers focused on the information requested.
- Use accurate dates and check that your employment and education history follow a clear timeline.
- Where examples are requested, describe what you did, your role, and the outcome.
- Tailor your examples to the duties and competencies set out for the role.
- If you need additional space, attach a clearly labelled separate sheet and indicate which section it relates to.
- Review spelling, grammar, names, telephone numbers and email addresses before submitting.

4. Writing strong competency examples

The competencies section is a key part of the application. It gives you the opportunity to show how your knowledge, skills and experience match the role. Your examples should be specific and should demonstrate your own contribution.

- Choose examples that are directly relevant to the competency being asked about.
- Briefly describe the situation or task you were responsible for.
- Explain the action you took, including your own responsibilities and decisions.
- Outline the result or impact of your work.
- Where possible, mention outcomes such as improvements made, problems solved, services developed or positive feedback received.
- Keep your answer concise while still giving enough detail to demonstrate your experience.

5. Common mistakes to avoid

Applications can be weakened by avoidable errors. Taking time to check the points below can help you submit a stronger application.

- Leaving required sections incomplete or unanswered.
- Providing general statements without examples or evidence.
- Omitting employment dates, job titles or referee details.
- Repeating the same example across several competency areas without adapting it.
- Submitting an application without reviewing the declaration and final checks.
- Missing the closing date or submitting in the wrong format.

6. Final checks before submission

Before submitting your application, take time to review the entire form and confirm that it is complete. A careful final review can make a significant difference.

- Check that all required sections of the form are completed.
- Make sure your competency examples clearly demonstrate your suitability for the role.
- Confirm that your referees have agreed to be listed and that their details are correct.
- Review the form for spelling mistakes, missing information and incorrect dates.
- Ensure you have signed or completed the final declaration where required.
- Submit the application in the format requested and before the stated closing date and time.

A well-prepared application helps the panel understand your experience, achievements and suitability for the role. Giving yourself enough time to prepare, write and review your form will help you submit the strongest application possible.