

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for the interest that you have shown in joining South Wales Fire & Rescue Service.

The Application Pack

Within this pack, you will find everything that you need to apply for the post, including:-

- An Application Form
- The Job Advert
- Copies of the Job Description and Person Specification
- An Equalities Monitoring Form
- This Candidate Guidance Booklet

Candidate Guidance Booklet

Please invest some time reading this Candidate Guidance Booklet. It is designed to provide you with important information on how to complete the Application Form and fully demonstrate your strengths to us.

Application Form

Completed Application Forms should be returned by the closing date shown on the Job Advert, to:- personnel@southwales-fire.gov.uk or by post to :-

**Recruitment and Assessment Team – People Services
South Wales Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
Forest View Business Park
Llantrisant
CF72 8LX**

If you wish to receive an acknowledgement that we have received your Application Form, please complete the enclosed Acknowledgement Card with your name and address. The card should be stamped and securely attached to your Application Form.

Our Commitment to You

Within South Wales Fire & Rescue Service we are committed to Equality and Diversity. Should you require this documentation to be provided in an alternative format (e.g. large print, audio) or would like additional support whilst completing your Application Form, please make contact with us using the telephone details below and we will make the necessary arrangements on your behalf.

All of our documentation is available in Welsh and we are able to communicate with you through the medium of Welsh if this is your preference. If you would like to discuss your requirements in this area, please make contact with us on the telephone number below.

We wish you every success with your application.

Yours sincerely



Deborah Doel – HR Manager Recruitment & Assessment



Preparing to Complete the Application Form

The Application Form plays a very important role - it helps us to decide which Candidates we should consider further and invite to take part in the main Selection Process. With this in mind, please:-

- Make time to complete the Application Form fully. Do not underestimate how long this will take.
- Check your work – make sure that you have completed all of the sections within the form.
- Use the opportunity to show us the experiences that you have had and how you meet the requirements of the job.

The following 4 steps should help you.

Step 1 – Consider the Job Description

The Job Description tells you the types of activities that you will have to carry out if you are successful within the Selection Process. Start by considering the Job Description and asking '*is this something that I would like to do?*' If you would like more information regarding what the job involves, please make contact with the Recruitment & Assessment Team using the telephone details on the bottom of this page.

Step 2 – Consider the Person Specification

Look at the Person Specification in detail. This document tells you what type of knowledge, experience and qualities a person will need to be able to carry out the role successfully to the standards required. The Person Specification also tells you the criteria that we are using to assess Applications – these criteria will be **highlighted in bold**.

When you're deciding what detail you would like to include in your Application Form, **make sure that each of the *Essential Criteria* that have been highlighted as shortlisting criteria have been addressed.**

Tip:- Successful Candidates will always have taken time to explain what they have done that relates to each of the *Essential Criteria* highlighted as shortlisting criteria within the Person Specification.

You may also find that some of the criteria within the Person Specification are called *Desirable Criteria*. The shortlisting panel will only take *Desirable Criteria* into consideration where there are a high number of Candidates who meet all of the *Essential Criteria* and it would be impractical to invite all of the Candidates to the Selection Process.

Tip:- Those shortlisting will only consider Applications that demonstrate that the candidate can meet all of the *Essential Criteria* applicable to the shortlisting process.

Step 3 –

It is now important to set aside time to complete all of the sections within the Application Form. Please provide all of the detail requested within each of the sections of the form. When you are recording your Employment History, record any gaps that you might have had between jobs and where appropriate give a short sentence to explain the reason for these gaps. Gaps in employment history will not act against you - this additional detail will help us get a complete and accurate account of your work and life experiences.

The biggest mistake Candidates make in completing their Application Form is in underestimating the importance of the section which asks for Additional Information. This is the section which allows you to sell yourself to us. **The Additional Information section should link directly to the shortlisting criteria set out in the Person Specification.** It is important that you address all of the points in the Person Specification in the order in which they appear. Imagine this being used as a checklist by the shortlisting panel.

In instances where a qualification is a shortlisting criteria, you should record this along with your other qualifications – you will not be required to record this under the heading ‘Additional Information’.

Similarly, where the ability to speak Welsh is highlighted as either an Essential or a Desirable criteria, you will be able to record this on page one of the Application Form and do not have to refer to it under the Additional Information section.

Tip:- Very often, successful Candidates will have used the shortlisting criteria within the Person Specification as headings within their Additional Information – this helps them to make sure that they have provided information against each of the criteria that will be assessed.

It is important to remember that those who are shortlisting will not take it for granted that you can achieve certain standards, you will need to show them within this Additional Information section.

Tip:- You can always use additional sheets of paper to make sure that you cover each of the criteria highlighted within the Person Specification.

Although it is important to be concise, it is not enough just to list your skills. We will not just take your word for it (e.g. ‘I am a good communicator’), we will need you to show us what you have done which makes you a good communicator (e.g. ‘I was aware that the information was confusing and as

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such I spent time explaining to the customer in plain speak what they needed to do and why’).

Tip:- Avoid simply repeating the words used in the Person Specification in your responses (e.g. ‘I am committed to Equal Opportunities’). You will need to show us that you are committed to Equal Opportunities by telling us what you have done in the past to ensure that you treat people with fairness and respect.

Please note that a Curriculum Vitae will not be accepted instead of an Application Form unless specifically requested. This helps us to ensure a uniform approach to shortlisting.

Step 4 - Before sending the form

When you think you have completed the form, ask someone to check through it as you may not be able to see your own mistakes.

Tip:- Keep a copy of your Application Form and details of the job to help you to prepare for the main Selection Process.

Other Information

References

References should cover a period of up to 3 years. If you have not been employed during this period, two character references will be required, one of which could be from your school or college where appropriate.

References from family members will not be accepted.

If you are already employed within the Service, your Line Manager will be invited to provide a reference.

References will be applied for following the Selection Process.

Criminal Convictions

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, most criminal convictions can become ‘spent’ or forgotten after a ‘rehabilitation period’.

Spent Convictions - If you have a conviction which is spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, you do not have to declare the conviction to us within the Recruitment Process unless the advertisement stipulates that the job is subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS Check). We

Recruitment & Assessment Hotline: 01443 232200

will only ask for a DBS check if the job that you are applying for involves working with vulnerable children and/or adults or is a Senior role dealing with Finances.

Please note :- If you are applying for a job that involves a DBS check and you have a spent conviction, this does not necessarily mean that you will not be progressed within the Recruitment Process – it depends on the nature of the offence and the post in question.

Unspent Convictions - If you have an 'unspent' criminal conviction, you have to declare this on the Application Form and you will be asked to provide details of this conviction. It is important to note that having an unspent conviction does not necessarily mean that you will not be progressed within the recruitment process – it depends on the nature of the offence and the post in question. It is also important to bear in mind that failure to disclose an unspent conviction could result dismissal.

If you are unclear whether or not you have a spent conviction or would like more information and advice on the law, details can be found on www.nextstep.direct.gov.uk.

Documentary Evidence

Please note that should you be invited to attend the Selection Process, you will be required to provide copies of your Certificates of Attainment or Qualifications which have been highlighted as relevant to the post. You may wish to ensure that you have this documentation at hand in readiness.

Equality & Diversity

We value all of our perspective and future employees and are committed to providing equal opportunities within recruitment, retention and progression. It is important to us that we are able to monitor our progress in this and as such we have included a copy of our Equalities Monitoring Form within this Recruitment Pack. All of the information you provide us on this form will be treated as confidential and will be used for monitoring purposes only.

There is a section within the Application Form asking you for information regarding any reasonable adjustments that you may require should you be invited to the main Selection Process. This information helps us to plan the appropriate support for you (e.g. in the case of dyslexia, we may need to schedule additional time for a Candidate where the Selection Process involves a written test. Having this information in advance, allows us to build appropriate time into our schedule).

We respect that some individuals may prefer not to record this detail on their form and as such, please contact a member of the Recruitment and Assessment Team who will ensure that should your Application be successful, we provide the appropriate support. It is important for us to highlight to you that this will not in any way impact on your Application.

Medical Screening

All successful Candidates must be screened for their fitness to undertake the

Recruitment & Assessment Hotline: 01443 232200

job. You will be given a Medical Questionnaire to complete. Occupational Health will assess the form and may require you to attend a medical examination. This applies to internal and external Candidates.

Feedback

Feedback is available upon request to all those who undertake the main Selection Process.

Comments, Complaints & Compliments

We are committed to ensuring that current and potential employees are treated professionally and fairly throughout the Recruitment Process. As such we welcome feedback from Candidates on their experiences within the Recruitment and Selection process.

Any Candidate who feels that they have been discriminated against within the Recruitment and Selection process may submit a complaint to the Chief Fire Officer. All complaints must be made in writing and must state the basis for the complaint. The case will be investigated and the findings detailed in a report. This information will be imparted to the complainant.

We hope that you have found this information beneficial. If you would like any additional information, please contact a member of the Recruitment & Assessment Team using the telephone details at the bottom of this page.

Terms and Conditions of Service for all roles can be found on the Recruitment Pages of the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Website (www.southwales-fire.gov.uk).

We wish you every success in your future career.

