

# **Independent Options (North West)**

## **Guidance Notes on Completing your Application Form**

## Introduction

Completing the application form is the first stage of the selection procedure. The information you provide is the only information we will use in deciding whether or not you will be short listed for interview, so you are strongly advised to complete the application form as fully as possible. **Pre prepared CV's will not be considered.**

It is very important that you complete your application form accurately and include all the information you think is relevant.

The following notes have been designed to help you complete your application form as effectively as possible, in order to ensure that it is treated fairly.

The application form will be photocopied, so please complete it in black ink.

Read through each section of the application form carefully. You may find it useful to do a rough draft first.

## Equal Opportunities

Independent Options is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment. It is our policy to ensure that all appointments are made on merit.

In order to monitor the effectiveness of this policy you are asked to provide the information requested in the recruitment monitoring sheet provided with your interview. The details supplied by you are confidential and will not be used for any other purpose than monitoring. The form will be detached from your application form and not used in the recruitment process.

Those candidates that declare themselves as disabled will be identified at the first stage of recruitment. This information will only be used in short listing to ensure that candidates with disabilities who meet the essential requirements of the job are offered an interview. This is in line with the Positive about Disabilities criteria.

The following definition may provide a useful framework for candidates to consider whether their condition would be considered as a disability.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines disability as a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substance and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities.”

## Completing the application form

### 1. Front Sheet

Please ensure that you put your name, address and telephone number in the space provided on the front page, this is the only space provided for this information. During the short listing process this front page will be removed from the application form to ensure equal opportunities.

### 2. Employment History

It is essential that you include all relevant work experience that you have had. This should include part time work or work undertaken on a voluntary basis. Outlining your previous work experience may help you uncover skills that you have taken for granted and help us to identify areas of transferable skills.

### 3. Education and Qualifications

Please give details of any formal education and qualifications, as well as any short/non qualification courses that you may have attended that are relevant to the post applied for.

### 4. Supporting Information

This section of the application form is very important as this is the section that you can tell us about your experience, knowledge, skills and qualities. Read through the job description and person specification that describes the necessary requirements for the post. Please ensure that your information is well organised and relevant. It should show to what extent you have gained the experience, knowledge, skills and qualities necessary for the post. Please refer to the person specification when completing this section, paying particular attention to the essential criteria giving examples of how you think you meet the criteria.

### 5. Short Listing Process

Once we have received your application it will be short listed by at least 2 managers. The short listing process is carried out using a number scoring system against the person specification. For each essential criteria that you demonstrate, you will be awarded 2 points. For each desirable criteria that you demonstrate, you will be awarded 1 point.

**Please note: it is not enough to state that you can do something or meet the person specifications, examples must be given to show that you have the experience, skills or knowledge. You must demonstrate that you meet the essential and desirable criteria to score points.**

## 6. References

Please provide the name and address of two people who know you and who are able to comment on your suitability for the post. One of these must be your current or most recent employer. If you have been out of paid work for a long period of time, give the name of someone who is aware of the transferable skills you have acquired. If you are a school or college leaver, then your head teacher or your tutor can supply the reference. **In all cases make sure you use someone who knows your capabilities, can comment on your reliability and is aware of your potential.**

References will not be taken up prior to interview, but it is advisable that you make sure the referee know you have given their name before we contact them.

Please be aware that in all cases we ask for details relating to sickness absence.

## 7. Criminal Records Bureau

For all posts within Independent Options we require an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure. Please refer to the enclosed information in the Recruitment of Ex- Offenders Policy.

## 8. General Points

When you have finished read through the application form carefully, checking for inconsistencies or omissions. It is essential that you provide full information as any perceived gaps will be explored at interview if you are short-listed. It may be useful to have someone else read through your form. Keep a copy of your application form as you will be asked questions relating to it should you be short listed for interview.

## 9. Interview

If you are short listed you will be sent a letter inviting you for a group interview and outlining any other tests that you may have to undergo. The group interview is part of a two stage interview and if you are invited to the group interview, further information will be sent to you about the process.

Following the group interview, successful candidates will be invited to attend a formal panel interview.

At the formal interview, members of the interview panel will ask you questions so that they can decide how well you match the requirements of the job. Some of the question may relate to the answers you have given in your application form. These questions enable the panel to make a fair assessment of each candidate so that their reasons for their decisions are clear, consistent and justifiable. The panel will take notes during the interview to assist in this assessment process.

You will be informed shortly after the interview if you have been successful or not. All candidates that are unsuccessful at the interview stage are offered interview feedback from a member of the panel.

We hope that you are successful in your application. However, if you are not, please do not be discouraged from re-applying. Your skills and experience may be what we need for our next vacancy.