



working for us

# Guide to applying for a job

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## Working for Glasgow City Council

Formed in 1996, we, Glasgow City Council, are Scotland's leading local authority. As one of the largest employers in Scotland, providing essential services to the people of Glasgow, we offer a wide range of challenging and rewarding jobs and careers at all levels across all of our services.

With excellent opportunities for our employees to develop and progress in their careers, we offer excellent benefits and competitive salaries.

You can find full details of these benefits in our [Applicant Guide to Employee Benefits](#), which is available online or in your application pack when you apply for a job with us.

### Our commitment to equality

As part of our policy on equal opportunities and employment law, we will make sure that you're not discriminated against in the recruitment and selection process because of:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender re-assignment.
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation
- Social Background.

We encourage applications from disabled people and we have signed up to the Disability Confident Scheme. This means we're committed to interviewing everyone who tells us in their application that they have a disability and who meets the minimum criteria (conditions) for the job.

We are recognised by the Age Positive Campaign as an "Age Positive Employer Champion".

As a Carer Positive organisation we will do everything we can to support our employees who are carers and have a variety of policies, procedures and guidance to support you in the workplace.

Having a criminal record doesn't mean that you can't work with us. We'll take into account the job you've applied for, the circumstances and background of your offences and any other relevant information.

If you decide to apply for a job with us, we want to give you as much information as we can to help you with your application. In this guide, we'll explain about the recruitment and selection process within the council, and give you hints and tips on how to make your application successful.

You can find out more about:

- how to apply for a job with us and what you need to do, including details of our competency-based approach; and
- the recruitment and selection process, including how to prepare for an interview, the types of questions we might ask you, the types of tests we use and the documents you need to bring.

So, if you're looking for a career in a forward-thinking organisation in an exciting, vibrant city, Glasgow City Council could be the place for you!



### The application process

#### The advert

The first stage of the application process is the advert. When you see the advert that describes the job you're looking for, you should look carefully at the information we provide about:

- responsibilities;
- qualifications;
- experience;
- knowledge and skills; and
- competencies.

The advert might also include details of any restrictions on the job.

#### Examples

- Any political restrictions under the Local Government and Housing Act (1989). This would mean that because of the type of job, you wouldn't be allowed to become a member of a local authority, the House of Commons or the Scottish or European parliaments.
- If you need to be a member of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG). The PVG is a membership scheme for individuals who undertake regulated work with vulnerable groups. It helps to ensure that those who have regular contact with children and protected adults (a person aged 16 or over who receives one or more type of care or welfare service) through paid and unpaid work does not have a history of harmful behaviour.

Membership records are subject to continuous vetting and are updated automatically if any new information arises. This ensures that new information indicating that you might be unsuitable can be acted upon promptly.

The Scheme Record shows the following basic membership information:-

- The type(s) of regulated work in respect of which the individual is a PVG Scheme member (thereby confirming that the individual is not barred from regulated work of that type).
- If the individual is under consideration for listing for the type(s) of regulated work.

The Scheme Record also includes any vetting information that exists in relation to the individual. Vetting information is:-

- Convictions and cautions held on central records in the UK.
- Whether the individual is included on the sex offenders register.
- Relevant non conviction information provided by police forces

- Prescribed civil orders.

### **New appointees to regulated work will be required to pay for their own PVG membership and scheme checks.**

- If you need a disclosure check. A disclosure is a document held by the police and government departments. It contains confidential information about your criminal history and is used to by employers to make safer recruitment decisions. You would need a disclosure check if the job involves:-
  - The administration of law.
  - Senior Management in banking and financial services.
  - Professional groups in law.

In addition to the above we are now required to obtain a basic disclosure check for any employee accessing the Public Services Network (PSN) as part of their role.

Disclosure information can include:

- details of your criminal record;
- information about whether you are on any lists that say you should not work with children or vulnerable adults; and
- relevant information held by the local police or a government organisation.

The disclosure may also say that there is no information.

### **New appointees to posts requiring a Disclosure Check will be required to pay for their own checks.**

From this, you should decide if your skills match those needed and consider any restrictions. If, having done this you feel that you're suitable for the job, you should apply.

The advert will provide details of how to apply for a job with us. One way to apply is to visit our website at [Working for the Council - Glasgow City Council](#) here you will find a link to the [myjobscotland](#) e-Recruitment portal where you can apply online. You can also find details here of how to request alternative format application packs.

The application pack will give you as much information as possible to help you to decide whether you want to apply for the job.

### **Online application pack**

The online advert will contain the role profile and person specification relevant to the job together with a link to guidance on how to complete your application and if appropriate any additional information required for the post.

The [role profile](#) and [person specification](#) describes the purpose of the job, the main activities and the skills, knowledge, qualifications and competencies you need to have (these forms are explained later in this guide). The online application form can be accessed by pressing the “apply now button”.

### The alternative format application pack

The contents of the alternative format application pack will vary depending on the job you apply for, but will include:

- the role profile and person specification relevant to the job; and
- an application form and guidance notes.
- if appropriate any additional information required for the post.

### Role profiles

We have 14 ‘job families’. Job families group together jobs that share a similar purpose and within each job family there is a different number of role profiles. Role profiles explain the purpose of the role and what we expect from you.

The role profile provides details of:

- the job family the role profile is part of;
- the **role profile level** – that is, the level of seniority within the job family that the role profile describes;
- what the role is for and why it’s needed;
- the main activities we expect you to carry out and the results you should achieve by doing each of those activities (this will be split into two headings – ‘actions’ and ‘end results’);
- who you’ll be coming into contact or working with and in what way;
- where you’ll be working and the type of conditions you may experience;
- whether you’ll need to follow standard procedures and refer to other people, or adapt and react to different circumstances using your own judgement;
- whether you have any other responsibilities (for example, managing people, budgets or relationships with suppliers);
- the qualifications you’ll need for the role and whether these are essential or desirable, the knowledge you’ll need (such as experience of dealing with particular people or situations) and the skills you’ll need (such as operating equipment, driving vehicles, cooking meals or writing reports); and

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- the main characteristics you need to show, such as attitude, motivation and behaviours, to make a difference and do a job well.

Role profiles list the main action you need to take to do the job, but not every single duty or responsibility. They explain the results you'll need to achieve, and list the competencies you need to show.

### Competencies

Competencies are about your behaviour at work and are based on attitudes and skills. They make the difference between doing a job and doing a job well.

There are two types of competency frameworks within the council – leadership and non-leadership. The competency framework for the job you're applying for will be based on the grade of the post and whether the role involves leadership. The role profile will provide details of the competencies relevant to the job you are applying for.

### Leadership competency framework

The leadership competency framework is made up of 15 competencies, arranged into the following three groups.

- Personal qualities
- Setting direction
- Delivering the service

### Personal qualities

Leaders will have certain personal qualities that they'll need to draw on to see them through the demands of the job. They need to have a high level of self-awareness and know their own strengths and limits. Leaders are motivated by wanting to make a difference to people by providing a high-quality service, while always looking to make improvements.

### Setting direction

Leaders need to have a vision to take action to modernise the organisation and make sure it responds to the needs of the people who use our services. As well as adopting a vision, leaders need to manage short-term and long-term priorities. This means being able to see the 'bigger picture' while paying attention to detail.

### Delivering the service

High-performing leaders provide leadership across the organisation – as well as across partnership organisations – to make things happen and deliver results. Effective leaders understand that joint working is essential and can hold other people responsible, as well as themselves, for targets they have to achieve.

### Non-leadership framework

The non-leadership competency framework is made up of the following five competencies.

- **Personal effectiveness** – displaying skills and attitudes to apply knowledge and understanding in different situations.
- **Providing excellent customer service** – exceeding the expectations of customers inside and outside the organisation through the quality of customer service.
- **Managing change** – helping us to make changes by focusing their effort and personal commitment to making the changes work.
- **Leadership** – taking the lead in developing the success of the business.
- **Delivering results** – focusing their attention and resources on meeting agreed business targets and priorities.

Not all competencies apply to every role. We use the competencies relevant to the job you're applying for to draw up the person specification for the role.

### Person specification

The person specification sets out the skills, knowledge, qualifications and competencies you need to carry out the activities given in the role profile. We use it at both the short-listing and interviewing stages of the recruitment and selection process as the criteria you'll be assessed on.

The person specification is made up of two levels.

- 1 **Essential** – the criteria that you need to meet to perform at a satisfactory level from the first day in the job. If you don't meet the essential criteria, you won't be short-listed for interview.
- 2 **Desirable** – the criteria that would allow you to perform the job more effectively.

### Application form

The application form gives you the opportunity to 'market' yourself to us and tell us how your skills, knowledge, qualifications and competence fits the requirements of the job. We will use the information you give us to decide whether to invite you for an interview. Before you fill in the application form, you should read the guidance notes.

You should read the instructions and questions carefully, and answer the questions fully. You should look at the job advert, role profile, person specification and other supporting information and tell us how your skills, knowledge, qualifications and competence match our needs.

Part F of the application form, which asks about your 'relevant skills, knowledge and competence' is your chance to provide specific examples of your work, or other activities, which show your ability to

meet the requirements of the post. You should use the space provided to put your case across, telling us why you, more than anyone else, should be offered the job. But don't try and cram everything into that space – use an extra page if you need to and remember if using an alternative format application write your name and address and the post you are applying for at the top of the page.

You must fill in an application form to be considered for a job. We will not normally accept CVs, unless there are circumstances where, for example, you cannot fill in the application form due to a visual impairment. If you have a disability, we can provide the application form in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or on computer disk. Please also tell us about any particular arrangements you would need if you were invited for an interview.

### General tips on filling in the application form

It's important that your application form makes a good first impression. Your competencies, skills and talents need to stand out.

You should:

- keep it neat, clear and easy to read;
- be honest and keep to the facts;
- practice on a rough copy first;
- check all your answers carefully, making sure that all dates match, that there are no spelling mistakes and that you have answered all the relevant questions fully;
- keep a copy of your final version for your own records; and
- if using an alternative format application use a large envelope – don't try and cram your finished application into a small envelope and spoil how it looks.

### Sending your form in

Make sure your application form is with us no later than the closing date shown on the advert. The myjobscotland e-Recruitment portal cannot accept applications after the closing date. Therefore we won't accept alternative format application forms we receive after the closing date, no matter what date you have written on the form.

For online applications follow the guidance on the myjobscotland e-Recruitment portal to submit your form. Alternative format applications can be returned by post or in person to the address shown on the application pack letter.

### Equality monitoring questionnaire

If you apply for employment with us we will ask you to fill in an equality monitoring questionnaire. The questionnaire will ask about your race, gender, whether or not you have a disability, age, sexual orientation, religion and belief. We would ask you to consider answering all of the questions and can assure you that this information will be treated in the strictest confidence. This information does not form any part of the decision making at any stage of the recruitment and selection process. Giving us this information is voluntary and if there's something you don't want to answer, you can choose not to disclose that information.

Equality monitoring information is important to us as it enables us to monitor and improve the effectiveness of our employment policies and practices, and comply with our legal obligations. Our [Workforce Diversity Information](#) page on Connect provides further information on this.

### Short-listing process

After the closing date, we'll gather together all the application forms we've received for the job and start the short-listing process.

We will treat your application fairly and equally and measure it against the person specification and short-list criteria for the post. We will focus on the skills, knowledge, qualifications and competencies needed for the job.

If you're not short-listed for interview, don't let this put you off applying for a job with us in the future. Look at why your application wasn't successful and try to learn from this. Look at the skills you need to develop and how you can do this so that your next application is successful.

If your application is successful and you're short-listed, we'll invite you to an interview. If you tell us on your application form that you have a disability, and you meet the minimum criteria for the post, we'll invite you to an interview automatically.

### Interview process

Getting invited to an interview means you've passed the first hurdle – your application must have made a good impression. At this stage we're interested in you, because on paper your experience and achievements show that you may be who we're looking for.

This is the point at which you have the opportunity to 'sell yourself'. First of all, it's important to remember the purpose of the interview. It gives us an opportunity to assess whether you are more suitable for the job than the other candidates. It's also your chance to find out more about the job.

Now you need to prepare yourself for the interview to make sure you make the most of the opportunity.

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### Preparation

Thorough preparation will give you the confidence to do your best at the interview, so do your homework! Find out as much as you can about us and the job – read all the materials we have provided in the application pack. Our website, [Working for the Council - Glasgow City Council](#), is a great source of information. You should look at the council plan, our main aims, and the latest news. As you consider all this information, look at how the job you're applying for relates to our aims.

### Before the interview

- List the competencies needed for the job and think about things you have done which show evidence of each one. Our [guide to describing our competencies](#) provides an overview of Grade 1-8 competencies and how these can be demonstrated at interview. Our [guide to the leadership framework](#) provides an overview of competencies required for Grades 9-14.
- Make sure you know the date and time of the interview, where it is being held, and the name of the interviewers (if appropriate).
- Check out how you'll get to the interview, and when you need to set off to be there in time. Plan your journey and have another method of getting there if needed. Consider a 'trial run' before the day of the interview, or check how long the journey will take.
- Have what you're going to wear ready beforehand.
- If you're asked to do a test, make sure you are prepared and understand what it involves (see pages 14 and 15 for more details).

### On the day

- Give yourself plenty of time to get ready.
- Try to relax and keep calm.
- Re-read the contents of the application pack to refresh your memory – make sure you haven't missed anything.
- Make sure you have all the relevant information and paperwork you'll need at the interview – for example, certificates or proof of eligibility to work in the UK (see pages 15 and 16 for more details).
- Aim to arrive at least 10 minutes early.

If you're well prepared, you'll know about us, you'll know about yourself and the skills, knowledge, qualifications and competencies you need to have, and you'll also have a good idea of the demands of the job. If you're well organised and have planned for the day, you'll be more confident and you'll feel less nervous.

### At the interview

Your interview will take the form of a 'competency-based' interview. Competency-based interviews are designed to allow you to show how competent you are in important areas of the job. We'll ask you to discuss specific examples of your previous work and achievements, what you did and how you did it. Try to give a range of different examples.

The aim of any recruitment and selection process is to make sure we choose the right person for the job. We will measure your skills, knowledge, qualifications, competencies and experience for the particular job you have applied for.

### Questions we might ask you at your interview

#### Competency-based questions

At the interview, we'll be looking for information about your past behaviour in certain situations.

The main things we want to know are as follows.

- In what specific situation did you show evidence of the competency?
- What action did you take?
- What was the result of your action?
- What did you learn from the situation?

The theme of the questions will be based around our main competency areas (as set out in section 2). The competencies we're likely to ask you about will be those set out in the role profile. You should be prepared to answer questions about your skills in at least the following areas.

- Influencing
- Communicating
- Decision-making
- Customer service
- Leadership
- Managing change
- Delivering results

Remember, you'll be asked to give specific examples that show evidence of these skills, so think about these before your interview! When you provide examples, you may find it useful to answer using the 'STAR approach'. That means thinking about the following.

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**Situation** In what context did you show these skills?

**Task** What was your role or responsibility?

**Action** What did you do?

**Result** What happened?

### Other questions

You should also be prepared to answer questions such as the following.

- Why did you apply for this position?
- How do you get on with people?
- What makes a good team member?
- Why should we employ you?

When you answer these types of questions:

- describe your skills, knowledge, qualifications, competencies and experience and how they relate to the job you're applying for and your personal characteristics (for example, communication skills, flexibility, being able to adapt easily);
- describe how you have previously worked as part of a team;
- mention your ability to get on with people at all levels; and
- give examples!

### Top tips

- Think about your answer.
- Speak up when answering questions.
- Avoid giving yes or no answers.

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### Asking questions

There's always the opportunity to ask questions at your interview and you should prepare for this – remember the interview is a two-way process. Try to concentrate on issues which are important to you. Write your questions down before the interview and take them with you.

When you ask questions, keep them brief. Remember, you're the one being interviewed! You could ask the following questions.

- Why is the job vacant?
- What are the main aims and responsibilities of the position?
- What would my first task be?
- Who would I report to?
- What training will I receive, if any?
- How soon will I hear about the outcome of the interview?

If a subject hasn't been covered at the interview that you think is important and in your favour, make sure you mention it.

Remember, it's not a good idea to have no questions at all – this may make it seem as though you are not interested.

### Assessment methods

We may use other methods, as well as the interview, to choose someone for the job. This will depend on the type of job you are applying for. We'll let you know what type of assessments we'll be asking you to do and the format of these (for example, going to an assessment centre) when we invite you for an interview. The types of test we may use include:

- group discussions and exercises;
- role play;
- presentations;
- an in-tray exercise;
- ability tests; and
- work-based tests.

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**Group discussions and exercises** – we may ask you to debate a topic, for example, as a way of assessing how you perform in a group setting and your competence in areas such as influencing, teamwork, decision-making, communicating, assertiveness and leadership.

**Role play** – we may ask you to act out a real-life work situation to see how you deal with it. We would assess your competence in areas such as listening, communicating, decision-making, problem-solving and management, and assess your behaviour and how well you cope in certain situations.

**Presentations** – we may ask you to give a presentation on a particular subject. We use presentations to assess your understanding of the subject, research skills, ability to prioritise important information, communication skills, use of technology and how you perform under pressure and within time limits.

**In-tray exercise** – we may ask you to sift through an in-tray and then answer a series of questions that need you to prioritise work, make difficult decisions within a tight deadline and prove your leadership skills. The purpose of this is to assess how you behave under pressure and whether you can understand facts and figures, anticipate future trends, events, problems or opportunities, and develop strategies for dealing with them.

**Ability tests** – we use these to decide whether you are suited to the role. They're designed to measure your level of competency and skill for the job, and can, for example, involve verbal and numerical reasoning tests. We may use verbal tests to measure your ability to understand written information, identify the most important points and reach conclusions. We may use numerical tests to measure your ability to extract, understand, use and assess statistics and make appropriate interpretations.

**Work-based tests** – we use these types of tests to measure your practical competence for a job. They may include:

- measuring how quickly and accurately you can use a computer keyboard;
- literacy tests;
- numeracy tests;
- assessing how you use specialist equipment; and
- work trials (arranged through Jobcentre Plus).

You should prepare and practise before these tests if you can (for example, by rehearsing a presentation). This will help you feel more confident on the day.

### Documents/Evidence

As part of the selection process, we'll ask you for the following information or documents.

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**References** – we will ask for references when you are offered a position with us. You should have the details of 2 referees ready, both should be employment related and where possible:-

- Be from 2 separate employers, with one being your current or most recent employer.
- Cover at least 3 years previous employment.

We will only consider character or personal references where you have no or a limited employment history. Please make sure that your referees know that we may approach them for a reference.

**Qualifications** – we'll ask you to provide evidence of your qualifications if they're essential for the post.

**Driving licence** – if you are applying for a position with us which requires you to drive we'll ask to see your driving licence. You will be issued with an [Authority to Access Driving Licence Information form](#) and asked to complete this with your check code and the information required to allow us to access your licence and driving record via the DVLA checking service. To generate a check code you need to either:-

- Go online and access the DVLA's Share Driving Licence Service at [www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence](http://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence) to generate a check code, or
- Telephone the DVLA on 0300 083 0013 and ask them to provide a check code.

Check codes are only valid for 21 days so please make sure that you don't generate it too early. Bring your completed form to interview and pass to the recruiting manager to avoid any delays. If you require any additional assistance regarding this matter please contact the recruiting manager who will be happy to help.

**Criminal convictions declaration form** – the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and (Exclusions and Exceptions) (Scotland) Order 2003 (as amended) applies to many of our posts. If you're successful in applying for a specific post, you'll need to complete a disclosure application (a police check). The results of this check might affect whether you're suitable to work in a particular job.

**Eligibility to work in the United Kingdom** – to meet our duties under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, we'll ask you to provide evidence that you're entitled to work in the UK. We'll ask you to bring certain documents with you to your interview and we'll give you guidance on what these are.

### Body language

Ok, so you've prepared for your interview, you've thought about the questions we might ask you and the questions you might ask us. You've prepared for the tests and are aware of the documents you'll need to bring.

Now you should think about how you want to come across at the interview. It's important to be aware of your body language as it gives people all sorts of messages. The right body language will give the message that you're a confident person.

Here are some things to look out for.

- **Your handshake:** your handshake should be firm.
- **Your posture:** sit straight and show some energy and enthusiasm. Slouching may suggest that you're tired or bored.
- **Eye contact:** look the interviewer in the eye. Don't stare but be sure to maintain regular eye contact. Avoid looking around the room while you're talking, because that can suggest that you're nervous or not confident about what's being discussed. Remember, the interview panel is often made up of two or more members so try not to be intimidated by this situation. Look at the person asking the question, and glance at the others occasionally as you reply.
- **Your hands:** gesturing or talking with your hands is very natural, but try not to do it too much as it can be distracting.
- **Fidgeting:** try not to fidget, as this makes you look nervous and will focus attention away from what you're saying. Also, don't fold your arms as this creates a defensive barrier between you and the people interviewing you.

### Do's and don'ts

#### Do

- Make sure you look presentable.
- Enter the room confidently.
- Shake hands firmly and introduce yourself.
- Be polite and friendly – look the interviewer (or interviewers) in the eye.
- Answer questions as fully as you can – avoid giving yes and no answers.
- Provide examples to prove your achievements.
- Be honest – don't exaggerate answers or lie!
- Look interested – ask questions as well as answering them.
- Ask if you don't understand a question.
- Speak clearly.
- Smile.

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- Nod to show you're listening.
- Get your good points across and be positive.
- Thank the interviewers for their time when you leave.

### Don't

- Be late!
- Fidget or slouch in the chair.
- Criticise past employers.
- Draw attention to your weaknesses, or be negative.
- 'Interview' the interviewer – in other words, don't ask too many questions!
- Act too informally or be over-friendly.
- Interrupt.
- Swear!

Above all, try to be you and try to be natural. Following these tips will allow the interviewers to concentrate on you, and not what you're doing in the interview.

### After the interview

After the interview, and while it's fresh in your mind, decide how you think it went. Think about the following.

- What went well?
- What went less well?
- Were there were any questions you found difficult? If so, why?

Take a note of any questions that you found difficult or that you were not prepared for. Learn from the interview and aim to become more confident and knowledgeable in the future.

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Use a checklist to help you identify areas for improvement. Did you:

- arrive on time?
- dress appropriately?
- greet the interviewers politely?
- avoid fidgeting?
- answer the questions fully?
- sell yourself?
- give examples?
- look at the interviewers and smile?
- thank the interviewers for taking the time to see you?

### **If you were not successful at interview**

If you find out that you haven't been successful, don't let this put you off from applying for other jobs with us. Try to find out why you were not successful by asking us for feedback. With this knowledge, you can then take the necessary action. This will help you with future job applications.

Aim to become more prepared and confident in the future by looking for areas to improve on and developing your stronger areas of performance. If you already work for the council, speak to your manager about your personal development plan (PDP)/Performance Coaching Review (PCR) and what action you can take and tasks you can get involved in to increase your chance of getting that job next time round.

### **If you were successful at interview**

Congratulations! All your preparation and hard work has paid off. If you already work for the council, you can look forward to developing your skills and experience further in your new role.

If you're new to the council, you can look forward to joining an organisation that prides itself on its people. Welcome to the team!

When you join us, you may need to fill in a confidential medical questionnaire, either online or over the phone. We may ask you to talk over your answers with our occupational health provider. You may also need to attend a pre-employment medical assessment.