



Candidate Application Guide

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Advertising

Whitehorse City Council advertises all vacancies through our online recruitment system:

<https://whitehorsecitycouncil.mercury.com.au/>

Our advertisements outline all relevant working conditions, including employment type, location, hours and salary. An accurate position description is included on every advertisement which outlines the purpose/objective of the role, the general duties that need to be performed and the qualifications, experience, knowledge and skills required to perform the role. Position descriptions are reviewed annually.

A physical requirements checklist is included on every advertisement, which lists the tasks performed in the role and the frequency in which they occur. Please ensure that you read through these prior to submitting an application.

Closing Date

Applications can be submitted until 11.45pm on the closing date listed in the advertisement.

What happens after I have submitted an application?

Once the advertising period has closed, all applications will be considered. A shortlist will be created following a merit based screening process. Shortlisted applicants will then be contacted by the hiring manager. This will usually occur within two weeks of the closing date for applications. We aim to notify all candidates, successful and unsuccessful of the status of their application within four - six weeks from the closing date. All applicants that were interviewed will receive a phone call to provide feedback.

If you are looking for an update regarding the status of your application, please feel free to contact the hiring manager for the role. Their contact details will be on the advertisement.

Submitting an Application

All applications must be submitted via our online recruitment system. If you are unable to submit an electronic application or experiencing technical difficulties with the system, please contact People and Culture on (03) 9262 6498.

Via our online recruitment system, you may be required to upload several documents as part of your application, including but not limited to a Cover Letter, Resume and a response to the Key Selection Criteria.

Cover Letter

Your cover letter should be addressed to the hiring manager and outline why you are interested in the role and the reasons why you would be the most suitable candidate for the role. It is suggested that you tailor your cover letter to sell how your skills and experiences best fit the tasks and responsibilities outlined in the position description.

If no key selection criteria is required, please ensure that your cover letter best answers the criteria as this is the primary scoring method throughout the interview process. You should aim to have your cover letter no longer than one page in length. If the key selection criteria is required to be addressed, a separate two page document is preferred. Please view “Key Selection Criteria” for more information.

Resume

Your resume should provide a summary of your skills and experiences throughout your professional career, and should be tailored to the role that you are applying for. An ideal resume should be clear, concise and outline your key achievements and point of difference.

When summarising your previous roles, instead of providing a task list from the position description, focus on describing your key achievements and your involvement within the organisation; you are effectively “selling” yourself to the organisation.

Your resume will often be the first document viewed from your application. As such you should aim to best utilise white space and draw the eyes of the reader to your most important information. It is recommended that the first page of your resume uses headings and sub-headings and aims to list your education and most recent/relevant work experience as a minimum. A good resume will be two to three pages long.

Key Selection Criteria

Hiring managers may ask you to provide a document outlining how your skills and experiences best meet the key selection criteria listed near the end of the position description (always under the heading “Key Selection Criteria”).

Please create a separate document and address your responses to the key selection criteria in one to two pages. When responding to Key Selection Criteria consider following the STAR format:

- **Situation:** Describe the event or situation you were in.
- **Task:** Explain what was required of you/what you were required to achieve.
- **Action:** What you did to achieve the task. Explain your role within the team.
- **Result:** Discuss the outcome from the action and what you achieved/learned.

Practicing with the STAR template will also assist with interview preparation; you should aim to answer questions in the same manner to give the interview panel a clear idea about what the situation was and what you achieved.

The key selection criteria will be the basis on which all applications are assessed on at both the shortlisting and interview stages.

Council is committed to all recruitment processes and appointments being made on merit and in fair and open competition. Selection will be based on the identified key selection criteria for the role contained in the position description as well as Council's organisational values.

Interview Panel

In the interest of fairness, all formal interviews must be conducted by a panel of three people, consisting of the current Supervisor (Hiring Manager), an expert (another employee who understands the role and its requirements) and an independent panel member. The independent panel member may be a member of the People and Culture team or any Council employee who has undergone recruitment training.

The interview panel will be made up of diverse individuals who have a good grasp of the job requirements and are trained on Equal Opportunity legislation.

The Interview

If you are selected for an interview, we will provide you with adequate notice and advise you if the interview will involve any other selection methods, for example, a work test or presentation.

Interview questions will be based on the key selection criteria from the position description, and will be designed to draw out examples of your previous experience, skills and knowledge. In addition it will enable you to demonstrate your personality, attitude and motivations.

Here are some tips in preparing for your interview:

- Research – find out more about the role and Whitehorse City Council to assist you in relating your experiences to the role you are applying for. Information may be obtained from our website or by speaking to the contact person for the role.
- Prepare – start thinking about examples from your experiences that relate to the role as you understand it from the position description. Forming answers that address the key selection criteria would be the best method of preparation for a great interview.
- Remember that values, behaviours and attitude is just as important as qualifications and experience. If you have been selected for an interview, you have been identified as capable to perform the role. The interview will focus on behavioural situations and how you would fit within the team/Council.
- Be ready to talk about why you are interested in the role and what attracted you to apply.
- If you have any questions you would like to ask, write these down to ensure you don't forget to ask them. All interviews will contain time for you to ask questions to the panel.
- Be positive – unless asked, try to avoid negative comments about your experiences.
- Relax – it's okay to be nervous!

Reference Checks

Council has an obligation to conduct reference checking and sees the value of this process. As a minimum, we will contact two referees provided by you. These will be asked for at the interview stage. At least one referee should be a current/recent work related Supervisor/Manager.

Pre-employment Assessments

Some roles will require candidates to undergo pre-employment screening assessments where these are essential to satisfy the requirements of the role, such as a Criminal History Check or Physical and Functional Assessment. The position description will detail these requirements and you will be advised of how they will take place during the interview process.

Recruitment Outcome

Upon completion of the recruitment process, all applicants will receive written correspondence of the outcome of their application. All candidates that were interviewed will receive a phone call, at which point feedback can be provided if requested.

If you have been successful Council will make you an offer of employment and on your verbal acceptance will send you a letter of appointment and an online employee kit containing all the information and forms required to get you started.

Equal Opportunity Employer

Whitehorse City Council is an equal opportunity employer and values the contributions a diverse workforce can bring to the organisation. Council ensures that fair, equitable and non-discriminatory consideration is given to all applicants regardless of age, sex, disability, marital status, pregnancy, race/ethno-religious background, industrial activity, gender identity, sexual orientation, status as a parent or carer, or political activity.