

## **Guidance notes for applicants**

These notes are intended to help you to participate in our selection process as effectively as possible and assist you in providing us with all the information that we need to help us understand how you meet the requirements of the job. Please read these notes carefully before completing your application form.

The application form plays an important part in the selection process, both as a tool for helping us to shortlist candidates for interview, and as a basis for the interview itself. To ensure fairness to all applicants, any decision to shortlist you for interview will be based solely upon the information you supply on your application form. Even if you are already known to the College as a previous or current employee, it is important you complete the form in full. We cannot take into account in the selection process any previous knowledge we may have of you.

### **Examine the job pack**

All of our job packs will include a full job description and person specification. The purpose, main duties and responsibilities of the post are set out in the job description and the knowledge, skills and experience we are looking for in the successful candidate are listed in the person specification. It is important to read all the information in the job pack before completing your application.

Look at the activities involved in the job. Ask yourself why you are interested in this job? Would it be a good career move for you? Is the move a promotion which would enable you to gain more responsibility or enhance your skills, or is it a sideways move intended to broaden your skills and experience? Think about what evidence you can provide to demonstrate you have the necessary knowledge, skills and experience.

Tip - explaining your current (and previous) jobs to someone else may help you uncover 'hidden' skills that you take for granted. You may also want to include voluntary/unpaid work experience, or experience gained via a role of responsibility in one of your leisure pursuits if this is relevant to the requirements of the job.

### **Completing the application form**

All applications must be through the online application form. Please click on the "Apply online" link next to the relevant vacancy and you will be redirected to the online recruitment system where you will need to create an account.

The different pages of the online application form will ask for key information about you, including your previous experience and skills that are relevant to the person specification. It is always advisable to do a rough draft first.

Please note that the supporting statement is limited to 6000 characters in the online form. If you choose to draft your statement in a Microsoft Word document and then copy and paste this into the online form, the recruitment system will also count the "hidden characters" in the Word document (typically formatting commands built into the originating programme). Hence, please ensure that the entirety of the document has pasted into the online form. You may need to shorten the text so that it is within the 6000 characters limit in the online form.

All applications are completed and submitted through our online recruitment system; however, if you are having trouble with our online application form, please contact us at [humanresources@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:humanresources@rcseng.ac.uk), or 020 7869 6103.

**Applications in the form of CVs will not be considered unless specifically mentioned within the vacancy details.** As per the Equality Act 2010, the College will accept applications in an alternative format.

The section headed '**Statement in Support of your Application**' is a very important part of the form. This is your opportunity to tell us specifically why you wish to apply for the job and what makes you a suitable applicant. In this section it is important that you provide us with evidence to demonstrate that you possess the knowledge, skills and experience required as set out in the person specification for the job. It is not sufficient to merely state in your application that you have the knowledge, skills or experience required; you will need to provide specific examples of what you have done and how you believe this demonstrates you meet each requirement.

It is important to remember that those involved in the selection process cannot guess or make assumptions about you. Make sure you tell us everything relevant to your application and that you complete all the sections on the form. The instructions on the application form are designed to assist you in providing us with the information we need.

Don't forget to proof-read your form and check for any errors before submitting your application.

We will notify you if you have not completed your application before the deadline, however, please try to ensure you submit your application by the closing date. Applications received after the closing date may not be considered. If you are having problems submitting your form, please contact us.

You can access your applications by clicking on 'My Applications'.

## **Shortlisting**

Shortlisting will take place as soon as possible after the closing date and is always carried out by at least two people. When shortlisting, we are making an assessment of how closely your application meets the selection criteria set out in the person specification. Shortlisters will go through your application in detail looking for specific evidence that you possess the knowledge, skills and experience required for the job. Unless you have provided specific evidence, supported by relevant examples, you are unlikely to be shortlisted.

You will be notified on the status of your application, whether successful or unsuccessful. Unfortunately, due to the high volume of applications we receive, we are unable to write to you and give specific feedback on why you have not been shortlisted.

## **Interviews**

We try wherever possible to indicate in the advert and job pack the date when interviews will be held so applicants can plan ahead. If you are shortlisted, you will receive an email inviting you to interview via our online recruitment system. You will need to use the log in details you created when you applied for the role, to log in and select an interview slot.

Our interviews may include an assessment to test out your ability to carry out specific requirements of the role for which you have applied. If you have a disability and require any adjustments to be made in order for you to participate in the selection process, please contact us immediately on receipt of your interview invitation to discuss this so we can accommodate your needs.

In some instances it may be necessary to hold the selection process in two stages and applicants may be called back for a second interview. You will be given full details about the arrangements if this applies to the selection process for the job for which you are applying.

### **Offers of employment**

All offers of employment at the Royal College of Surgeons of England are made subject to receipt of references, proof of address and security clearance satisfactory to the College. Under the Asylum and Immigration Act, we are required to check that anyone taking up employment with us has the legal right to work in the UK. All successful applicants will therefore be asked to provide us with documentary evidence to support their entitlement to work in the UK prior to taking up employment.

### **Data Protection Act, 1998**

Information provided by you as part of your application will be used in the recruitment process. Any data about you will be held securely with access restricted to those involved in dealing with your application and in the recruitment process. Once this process is completed, the data relating to unsuccessful applicants will be stored for up to 12 months and then destroyed. If you are the successful candidate, your application form will be retained and form the basis of your personal record.

We hope you find the above helpful and good luck with your application