

Modern Slavery PEC

Job Application Guidance

Thank you for your interest in applying for this position at the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (Modern Slavery PEC; the Centre).

Your application will be made up of three key documents

1. A CV/resume
2. A cover letter describing how you meet the criteria for the job
3. An equal opportunity monitoring form (this is not shared with the shortlisting panel)

This guidance will help you to complete the second document on the list: the cover letter describing how you meet the criteria for the job

It is important to read the job description fully and carefully before you decide to apply. This is to make sure you understand what the job involves and think you are able to do what is expected.

Writing a cover letter

In the job description document you will find a section called 'Person Specification'. This is a list of skills, knowledge and experience we would like candidates to have. Some of these are 'Essential' which means we would like all applicants to meet these criteria, and other are 'Desirable' which means they would be nice for you to have but they are not essential skills for undertaking the role.

Why do we have this Person Specification?

This Person Specification describes the types of qualities we would like a person to have when applying for a job with us. It gives us a standard list of things that we can use to compare different applicants' suitability for the role against each other in a way that is fair.

A good cover letter will describe how you meet each of those criteria, giving real examples of how you have done this in the past, in work, volunteering or other experiences.

You should use the cover letter to talk about your skills, experience and knowledge and how it is connected to the job we are advertising. For each criteria in the personal specification, the panel would like to see an example of how you meet this requirement (see example below). You can also tell us about any other relevant things related your experience, whether it is through employment or volunteering, and any education or training you have undertaken. This can be formal education, for example through a school, college or university, or it can be informal, for example any courses you have taken online or textbooks you have read and worked through in your own time.

In the box below we give an example of how you can give a good response to a possible criterion in a Person Specification, including the level of detail we would like to see for each one.

Example

If the 'Person Specification' wants an applicant to have:

"An ability to prepare different types of materials such as emails, calendar invites, meeting papers and notes, presentation slides and timesheets"

An example of a good response to this in the cover letter could be:

"I have prepared a lot of different materials in my current role. I am responsible for setting up meetings for the team which includes sending emails to coordinate times. I am also responsible for sending the Outlook invitations, taking notes of the meetings in Word and sharing the notes after the meeting has ended."

OR

"At my local social group I was responsible for managing the email enquiries. I would respond to new and existing member questions and would also share weekly email updates. I was also in charge of keeping a record of membership payments each week in Excel. I have used PowerPoint and Word to create posters for the group."

Examples don't have to be from a past job, it can also be experience you have had across different areas of your life.

You can also see in each example above they go into detail about their specific experience which is very useful when it comes to shortlisting.

How we will shortlist people for interview

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of individuals connected to the Modern Slavery PEC, who have an understanding of the job and of the wider goals of the Centre. There are usually 3-4 panellists. The Modern Slavery PEC is committed to a fair and equal recruitment process for all, and part of this involves making sure our panels are made up of a diverse range of people with different backgrounds and experiences. By doing this, we aim to reduce the risk of conscious or unconscious bias and ensure equal treatment and opportunities for all applicants.

The selected panel will shortlist the applicants to be interviewed by comparing the information each applicant shares in their cover letter with the information asked for in the Person Specification. The people who best demonstrate that they meet the points listed in the Person Specification will be invited to interview.

We do this by looking at each Essential and Desirable criteria in the Person Specification and scoring how well an application has met each point. The scores are:

- 2 – full evidence of meeting criteria
- 1 – partial evidence of meeting criteria
- 0 – no evidence of meeting criteria

Here are some different ways of describing experience that would score either 0,1 or 2.

Person specification asks that an applicant describes how they are: *“Comfortable liaising with a variety of different people in and outside of the Centre”*

Example: 0 – no evidence of meeting criteria

“I am comfortable talking to and meeting with lots of different people”

Example: 1 – partial evidence of meeting criteria

“I am comfortable talking to and meeting with lots of different people. I have attended and spoken at meetings with my team on a regular basis and have sent emails to external customers.”

Example: 2 – full evidence of meeting criteria

“I am comfortable talking to and meeting with lots of different people. For example, at my social group I was often the first person to speak to new members and so the group leader gave me the responsibility of welcoming and guiding new members, and of introducing the new people to the wider group. I enjoy meeting people and always try to give them a good impression and make them feel comfortable.”

You can see from the above that it is important that you give specific examples to describe your experience and take extra time to show how you and your skills match what we’re looking for. The cover letter is where you have an opportunity to share with us who you are, so we welcome this extra detail about you. Remember, we cannot assume that you have any skills, knowledge or experience so it’s very important you explain how you meet each of the points given in the Person Specification.

When scoring, priority is first given to the Essential criteria as these are the most important skills and knowledge we need someone to have to be able to do the job. If we receive a lot of good applications, we will use the Desirable criteria scores to help us identify excellent applications. If you also meet any Desirable criteria we ask that you give us examples of this in your cover letter to give you a good chance of being shortlisted and invited to be interviewed.

This standard scoring process helps us to ensure that the shortlisting process is only based on the candidates’ skills, experience and knowledge of the role, to create equal opportunities and to lessen the risk of conscious or unconscious bias.

The panel all shortlist applications independently of each other, scoring cover letters against the Person Specification. The panel then meet with each other to discuss their scores and agree on which applicants have scored the highest and will be invited to interview.

Offering feedback

We receive many applications for our jobs and, as a small team, it is not possible for us to give specific feedback to everybody who applies but is not shortlisted. We will provide feedback to anyone who attends an interview with us.

Thank you again for your interest in working with us at the Modern Slavery PEC and we look forward to receiving your application.

Informal questions about any of our roles can be sent to office@modernslaverypec.org.