Many employers now ask you to complete an application form rather than submit a CV, either by using an online form or by downloading a document to complete and email back to them. This guide includes some handy tips to help you write an effective application, along with links to other resources that you might find useful.

**Before you start completing your application form:**

- Copy or print off the job description, person specification and the named person and keep their name and contact details – sometimes these details aren’t available online after the closing date has passed, and you might need them at the interview stage.
- Read the job description and person specification thoroughly and thoughtfully.
- Research the organisation well – their mission statement, ethos, values.
- Read the application form carefully. Although most ask for similar sorts of information, every application form is different, so you need to be sure what details to include where. Typically, they start with asking for your personal details, education and work experience, and referee details, and then have a ‘supporting information’ or ‘personal statement’ section.
- Whilst your personal statement is a key section that will determine if you progress in the recruitment process, don’t underestimate the time it takes to complete the other parts, or the importance of ensuring your details are accurate.

**Writing your personal statement**

- With online applications, it’s worth drafting your application offline first. That way, you can do a spellcheck and you won’t lose everything if the employer’s server goes down. You can then copy and paste your completed draft into the form.
- Check carefully to see if there is a word or character limit, so you know how much you should write.
- When writing your statement, it MUST be tailored specifically to the person specification for the role, (or the requirements outlined on the advert, if there isn’t a full person specification provided). Address all of the essential and desirable skills and provide evidence that you
have the required skills and attributes. Use the person specification as a guide for how to structure your application.

- You can cite relevant examples from paid and voluntary work experience, your academic course and from your interests. It’s important to provide evidence of how or where you gained the necessary skills.
- Use the CAR method: Context; Action; Result – e.g. As Treasurer of a student society, I used my IT skills to create a new members’ database which enabled me to keep track of and then chase outstanding subscription payments. Purely as a result of this, membership income rose by 10%. This example is good because it gives a clear outcome & achievement – it’s not just mentioning what your responsibilities were.
- Be clear and concise. Include only what is relevant. Write with impact by choosing positive verbs, such as “created”, “devised”, “developed”, “negotiated”, “advised”, “implemented”, “initiated”, “accomplished”. You can find a more comprehensive list by searching for ‘247 Skills and Verbs’ in the Resources tab on MyHub (myhub.leedsbeckett.ac.uk).

Other things to remember:

- Check your completed application thoroughly and ask someone else to look over it too.
- Always keep a copy of your completed application form to refer back to if you get through to the interview stage.
- Be resilient. Don’t get downhearted if you don’t meet with instant success: ask for feedback and adapt future applications accordingly.

Useful Resources

There are many resources to help you with writing an effective application. The ideas below are a useful starting point.

- MyCareer, bit.ly/1PatXs1, offers a huge database of careers-related resources, including help with Application writing.
- The Prospects website, prospects.ac.uk, has a useful guide to writing applications - prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/applying-for-jobs/write-a-successful-job-application
- TargetJobs website, targetjobs.co.uk, further help on completing graduate application forms: bit.ly/1JSN4zm
- This guide and other resources are available via the Resources tab on MyHub (myhub.leedsbeckett.ac.uk). It is also worth looking in the News section for useful tips – the Careers Team will often post useful resources and articles related to CV writing.
What other help is available?

As outlined on the Applications FAQ on MyHub, the Employability team are here to support you with writing an effective application. Once you have completed your draft application, you can meet with a Careers Consultant for individual feedback. The easiest way to do this is to pop into the Student Hub and speak with a member of the Employability team, or you can call us on 0113 812 5995 (City Campus) or 0113 812 7335 (Headingley Campus).

MyHub is home to a wealth of careers resources. For a useful summary and links to the main ones, take a look at Careers FAQs: myhub.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/students/faqs/detail/198/careers-faqs.

Connecting with employers

Our team can connect you to a wide range of employers, we also provide up-to-date information about the labour market and what employers are looking for in our students and graduates. When you use MyHub to search for vacancies make sure you check the employer information – this is where we record any specific hints / tips or “extra” information about their recruitment and selection processes. You can do this when you look at individual vacancies, or when you are researching particular companies or organisations.

We have an active calendar of employer events on campus throughout the academic year. These include our Annual Careers Fair and a number of smaller sector-specific careers events that focus on a particular industry. You can also meet employers at information stands, presentations and our new Spotlight On series. For full event listings and information check our What’s On page and the MyHub events section.

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We endeavour to update this factsheet annually. However, if you do find any broken links, please report them to careers@leedsbeckett.ac.uk. The Information Team would also welcome your feedback on this resource. If you have any comments, please send them to the above email address.

To request this leaflet in an alternative format, please contact us.

For further information on the Employability & Job Shop Team, please go to leedsbeckett.ac.uk/studenthub/careers/
Alternatively you can contact a member of our team on:

0113 812 5995 (City Campus), 0113 812 7335 (Headingley Campus)