



## **Student’s Guide to Social Work Applications**

Completing a job application is the first stage where employers get an opportunity to view applicant’s skills, experience, and knowledge relating to the advertised position. This process helps hiring managers to make judgements on candidates they wish to select for the next stage which is the interview. Therefore, it is important at this stage that students sell themselves, demonstrating their abilities that will help them to stand out in a competitive market.

Below we have collaborated with all our partner employers to create a guide for student workers to support them with completing job applications.

<b>DO’s</b>	<b>DON’TS</b>
DO be honest about gaps in your skills.	DO NOT use abbreviations, acronyms, jargon or slang.
DO give examples relating to practice or your personal life i.e. if you are a unpaid carer/ care leaver.	DO NOT assume the employer knows everything about you.
DO research the Local Authority or Organisation that you are applying for and be positive about them in your application.	DO NOT leave your application to the last minute, employers can tell when an application has been rushed.
DO proofread your application before submitting or ask someone to read for you to check it. Checking Grammar and flow.	DO NOT or avoid cut/ pasting information if applying for multiple positions as person specifications will differ for each employer or specified role.
DO make sure you have read and understood the questions and person specification	DO NOT submit your application late, it will not be acknowledged.
DO provide evidence that you have all the skills, knowledge and values required.	DO NOT write reams and reams of supportive information, be concise and get to the points you are trying to make or evidence.



## What Social Work employers looking for....

- Your skill set, communication, written, analytical skills, and evidence of these skills in your application.
- Your knowledge of Social Work, information relevant role, legislation, values, responsibilities, and duties required, evidence of these in your application.
- Your use of language when describing your experience with people and services, evidence of anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Your level of grammatical skills, spelling and how the application has been structured, particular is a personal statement is required.
- Your level of related experience to the position, so be sure to use your placement experiences and other related work or life experiences here.
- Your passion and enthusiasm for the post and Social Work – the application isn't just about what you know, they are looking for your core values and what motivates you.
- That you have answered the question. Sounds simple, but you will be surprised how many applicants don't get shortlisted as they have missed the point of the question.
- Use of case examples relating to the question(s) i.e. I am a good communicator.... tell us how!. Using a good case example to back this up as evidence, or I understand the Care Act 2014....Tell us how again use an example.
- Where you may not have a direct case example then clearly demonstrate your knowledge of the topic and how this would be used in practice.
- That you meet the essential criteria so make sure that you check this before applying i.e. The required qualification or if driver license required.
- Honesty: If you are a Newly Qualified Social Worker, we don't expect you to know everything. Be honest about this but add you want to learn more about this i.e. I am dedicated to developing my Skills & Knowledge in this area through training/learning from peers.



## Useful Tips...

- Give yourself enough time to read the application thoroughly, and then to complete and submit it.
- You are considered for shortlisting based on what is written in your application only.
- Go through the job description and check the person specification – can you meet the requirements.
- Be concise and clear, don't make assumptions or write reams and reams of supportive information.
- It will help the selection panel if you can follow the **person specification** in order and structure your supporting information around the person specification.

**Where supportive statements are requirement a useful model to use is the CAR Model (Bluesteps (2011) CAR Interview Techniques).**

Supporting statements need to provide evidence of the skills, attributes and knowledge the employer is looking for.

**The CAR model** is useful for this:

- **Context:** What was the situation or your understanding of the issue, what was the task/process were you required to carry out? Keep it brief, but specific.
- **Action:** What did YOU do? What was YOUR role? What actions did YOU take? Give practice examples using active language. – link theory/research as well as knowledge, skills and values to your practice examples
- **Result:** What was the outcome? What did you achieve? What was improved? Qualify and quantify. – link to knowledge skills, values

**REMEMBER THE APPLICATION IS THE FIRST IMPRESSION OF YOU THE EMPLOYER, SO MAKE IT COUNT!... and Good Luck**

