

Finding a Job or Apprenticeship

Application Forms



Most companies ask you to complete an application form. The form is the same for each applicant, which makes it easy for employers to compare them.

It is your chance to **sell yourself**, so you need to make sure your form looks good. Some companies may ask you to complete an online application form.

1. Before you fill in a form:

- Read any instructions first.
- Read through the form to see what to put where.
- Look at the job advert to see what the employer is looking for. Do you have the necessary qualifications, skills and qualities?
- Take a couple of photocopies of the form. Use them for practice and do a rough version first – make your mistakes on that.
- Check the closing date to make sure you give yourself plenty of time to complete the form.



2. Now fill in the form:

- Follow the instructions.
- Fill in every box. If you don't know the answer to a question, think about who you could ask to help you.
- Write neatly in the space provided.
- Try not to make mistakes.
- Make sure your spelling, punctuation and grammar are correct. Use spellcheck but also get someone you trust to check everything.
- Do your answers cover everything the employer is looking for?
- Check with your referees before giving their names.
- Ask someone to check the form again before you send it off.
- Send the form in before the closing date.

3. Online applications

Many companies now ask you to complete an online application. Some may also ask you to complete an online test before you then submit your application.

Filling in a form online can be more difficult than doing it on paper. The same rules apply:

- Read any instructions first.
- Think about what you want to say.
- Make sure what you say covers what the employer is looking for.
- Take your time: don't rush it.
- Check before saving and sending.
- If possible, print off a copy of the application form, complete it in rough first and then type it online.



4. Covering letters and emails

You might be asked for a covering letter to go with your application. Make sure:

- You don't waffle – keep it short and simple.
- You include your name & address on the letter.
- You say why you are writing and what you want, including the title of the job you are applying for.
- Your writing is neat and your spelling is correct.
- You use black or blue ink on white paper.
- If you started with Dear Sir or Madam, end with *Yours faithfully*. If you used a person's name, end with *Yours sincerely*.
- If you choose to email your application, make sure that your email is professional and written as you would write a covering letter.

5. Supporting information

Most application forms contain a section that asks you to explain how you meet the essential criteria on the person specification.

This is your chance to sell yourself and your skills and abilities to the employer.

It is the most difficult part of the form to complete so set aside time to plan what you are going to write.

Don't leave it blank!