

APPLYING FOR JOBS – A GUIDE

These notes are intended to help you to participate in our selection process as effectively as possible. Please read these notes before submitting your application to ensure that you are providing us with all the information we need to consider your application further.

Our recruitment process

Our selection process has been carefully designed to match your skills to a suitable vacancy, and to be fair to everyone. In setting out how we recruit our people, we hope to give you a clear idea of what to expect from us, and what we will be looking for from you.

Submitting your application

You will need to apply online for all of our advertised roles. Simply go to the 'Search for jobs' page, and search under the reference number or job title for the role you're looking for, and follow the instructions to apply online.

If you have any difficulties, you can contact the HR department on + 44 (0) 1937 546330 or email BL-Recruitment@bl.uk

All the requirements for a specific post will be outlined in the job description. Please read this through thoroughly to make sure the job you're applying for is applicable to you. Your application will be assessed on how closely your knowledge, skills, experience and competencies match the essential job requirements. The short-listing decision will be based solely on the information you provide in your application.

Making an impact

We are only able to proceed with your initial application on the basis of the information you provide us with. The guidance below will help give you the best possible chance of succeeding to the next stage:

- Ensure your application is well-organised, logical and easily understandable. Your experience, education and qualifications should be listed in reverse chronological order.
- Ensure you answer all the all the questions asked in the application.
- Don't pad out your application unnecessarily. Include everything that is relevant, but keep it brief.
- Keep a clear picture in your mind of the job for which you are applying, and the skills you have that most closely match the requirements.
- Take some time to think about your accomplishments, such as: volunteer activities, jobs, projects, assignments, travel and team activities. Identify the personal qualities they brought out in you, what you did and what was the outcome.
- Do a final check of your application for spelling mistakes and errors.



Interviews

If you are short-listed we will contact you via email or telephone to invite you to attend an interview. We will try to give you a minimum of one week's notice of your interview time. While we will try to be as flexible as possible to accommodate your needs, please be aware that it is not always possible to re-schedule interviews. You will generally be interviewed by at least two people and should expect the interview to take between 45 minutes and one hour. You will be advised before the interview if you are required to do a presentation or participate in any form of further assessment. Second round interviews may be conducted where appropriate.

Speculative applications

We do not accept speculative applications or CVs for employment. Please only send your application if you are applying for a specific, advertised post. If you are interested in working with us then please register your details and you will be notified of job opportunities which meet your selected criteria as soon as they become available.

Frequently asked questions about the initial application process

About using the internet

- **What can I do if I cannot access the internet from home?** You can get internet access from a number of places – many cafés, libraries and job centres have computers that you can use for internet access.
- **What can I do if this site is slow?** This may be down to the amount of traffic that your Internet Service Provider (ISP) is experiencing. Contact your ISP to find out about traffic.
- **What can I do if this site cannot be displayed properly?** This may be because of the browser or monitor settings on the computer that you are using. You may need to adjust your browser or monitor settings.
- **What can I do to report a fault with this site?** Please contact the HR department on + 44 (0)1937 546330 or email BL-Recruitment@bl.uk

About vacancies

- **Who can I speak to about a vacancy that I have seen advertised on this site?** Please use the email address at the end of each job advert if one has been supplied.
- **How do I find a potential vacancy in which I may be interested?** There are two ways of doing this. You can either use the search facility or the alerts facility. In either case you will need to select the kind of job that you are interested in from categories shown in the drop down menus. If you are using the search facility, you will then need to press submit; if you are using the alert facility you will then need to confirm your selection.
- **What can I do if I cannot find a vacancy that I'd be interested in?** Create an alert so that when a suitable vacancy is added you will receive notification via email to the address you supply.

About using the application system

- **What happens if I forget my username and password?** Simply click the link 'Forgotten log-in details?' Then enter the same email address that you supplied when first applying and these details will be sent to you.
- **What happens if I set up an alert and have not received anything?** When you create an alert you will receive an email asking you to confirm that you wish to receive further notifications. If you have done this and are not receiving alerts this is either because no new vacancies matching your criteria have been added or because you need to refine your criteria.
- **What does the 'Email a Friend' feature do?** This facility enables you to email a friend or colleague information about a current opportunity in which you feel they may be interested.

About applications

- **How do I apply?** Search for the vacancy in which you are interested and then apply online by clicking the link 'Click here to apply for this job' which can be found below the advert text.
- **What do I need in order to submit an application?** You will be asked for your basic contact information – name, email, postal address and telephone numbers. In addition, you will need to tell us details of your employment and educational history, your qualifications, referees and other information in support of your application plus an indication as to how you found the vacancy for which you are applying. You may also be asked a number of application questions – where this is the case please complete every question and include relevant examples where possible. You will also be asked to submit details that will be used for monitoring the diversity of our candidates – however, this is not compulsory. As you complete each section click the 'Section complete' link. When you have completed your application click the 'submit' link. Sometimes you may be asked to upload supporting documents such as a CV or other job related information, and if this is required it will be clearly stated in the online advert. If you are required to upload a document please upload to the 'Document upload' section on the application form. Please note this is not a requirement for most vacancies.
- **Please note that it is vital that you have a valid email address. What happens if I do not have an email address?** You can obtain email addresses from many webmail providers such as Microsoft Hotmail. However if necessary we will correspond with you by post.
- **How long will I need to complete an application?** This will depend on the closing date for the vacancy the information required for the vacancy. Please remember that you will be able to save and return to your application up to and including the closing date on the advert.
- **Do I need to complete this application in a single session?** No. You can return to update your details as often as you wish before submitting your application. Simply click 'Update my details' and enter your username and password. Remember to save your details when you have entered information into a section to ensure information is not lost. Once you are happy with the information you have entered in any particular section remember to click in the box 'Tick here to mark this section as complete'.
- **What happens if I cannot submit my details?** Please ensure that you have submitted your details in the correct format and that mandatory details are included.
- **What happens if I cannot upload requested documents?** If your file is very big and your internet connection very slow, you may find that your user session has expired during upload. Please try again when your internet connection speed has improved.
- **I have entered answers to the initial questions but I am not allowed to start my application. What do I need to do?** Unfortunately, at this time, you do not meet the minimum criteria for this role within the British Library.

About response

- **How long will I have to wait before hearing about my application?** This can vary depending on each particular vacancy but we will send you an email acknowledging receipt of your application.
- **What can I do if I have made an application and have received no confirmation?** Log back into your application to make sure that you have completed it and pressed the 'Submit' button.
- **What can I do to check the progress of my application?** Please send an email to the named contact in the job advert.

About interviews

- **Will I be paid travel expense if I am invited for an interview?** We would expect you to make your own travel arrangements.
- **If my application is unsuccessful will I be given feedback?** Unfortunately due to the volume of applications that we receive it is not possible to automatically provide feedback. Should you require feedback please email BL-Recruitment@bl.uk and your request will be forwarded to the relevant Manager for a response. Please state in your request if you wish for the feedback to be verbal or written.
- **What if I want to report misconduct or dispute the recruitment decision?** Please contact the HR Recruitment team at BL-Recruitment@bl.uk

Data Protection Act 1998

Information provided by you will be used to assess your application against the requirements for the job, and for statistical purposes only. We retain information about job applicants for a maximum of six months after an appointment has been made to that vacancy. If you are successful, your application information will be retained and form the basis of your personnel file. Any data about you will be held securely with access restricted to those involved in the recruitment process. By submitting an application for employment, you are consenting to the recording, processing and use of the information that you provide for the purposes described above.

Disability & Diversity

The British Library is committed to employing disabled people and is an accredited user of the Two Ticks Disability Symbol that is awarded by Jobcentre Plus. We have therefore agreed to take action to meet the five commitments regarding employment, retention, training and career development of disabled employees. One of our commitments is to guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum (essential) requirements in the job profile. If you generally meet the required level of competence and essential criteria as specified in the online job description, you will automatically be guaranteed an interview.

To ensure we invite all disabled candidates who meet the minimum (essential) criteria for an interview, please complete the equal opportunities form as part of your application. It is not necessary to state the nature of your disability.

Frequently asked questions about diversity

- **Does the company employ individuals with disabilities?** The Library is an equal opportunities employer and applications are welcome from all members of the community.
- **Do you have an upper age limit for applicants?** No, there are no restrictions on age apart from where applicants are past the retirement age for employees of the British Library.
- **Do you sponsor foreign workers?** British and European law states that we cannot employ any person who does not have permission to live and work in the UK. In exceptional circumstances we do sponsor work permits for highly specialised roles when the skills and experience we require are not obtainable in the UK or EU.

Interviews

If you are short-listed we will contact you via email or telephone to invite you to attend an interview. We will try to give you a minimum of one week's notice of your interview time. While we will try to be as flexible as possible to accommodate your needs, please be aware that it is not always possible to re-schedule interviews, You will generally be interviewed by two people and should expect the interview to take between 45 minutes and one hour. You will be advised before the interview if you are required to do a presentation or participate in any form of further assessment. Second round interviews may be conducted where appropriate.

Other employment

In order to monitor working hours for the purpose of the Working Time Regulations, you are asked to disclose names of any other employers for whom you work and the hours/days that you work if you are made a job offer.

Offers of employment

All offers of employment at the Library are made subject to receipt of satisfactory references, security and health clearance. Additionally 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 documentary evidence to prove they are entitled to work in the UK prior to taking up employment. You will usually be asked to bring documents that show your entitlement to work in the UK at the interview stage.

- **Security checks** – A search of the National Criminal Records held by the police will be conducted on all successful applicants. This is part of an essential security procedure and helps us to satisfy the Library about your character. A criminal record will not necessarily disqualify you from working for us, however if discrepancies are found between the information you supply and the information we receive from the police, we will discuss this with you. Details of specific criminal records will not be kept on file. Successful candidates who will be working with children will be required to undergo a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check.
- **Health check** – If you are successful you will be required to complete a health questionnaire to ensure that you are fit to perform the job. Your questionnaire will be returned directly to our retained Occupational Health provider, and they will provide a recommendation for fitness to work.
- **Reference checks** – Referees will only be requested on the application form. You will be required to provide the names and contact details of two referees who can provide information regarding your suitability for the post. Both references should cover the last five years. These should be from responsible persons who are well acquainted with you and your work. Referees are normally typically only contacted once an offer is made, however some posts require reference checking to take place prior to interviews. You will be asked permission if references need to be requested before interview stage.

Please note that if you do not have an email address for one or both of your referees, please enter n@a in the email address box. Your application will not be able to progress without this.

Should you not wish referees to be contacted at the short-listing stage, you must indicate this explicitly in the references section of your application.

- **Professional qualifications** – If appointed you will be requested to provide proof of all relevant qualifications.
- **Equal opportunities** – It is the Library's policy to provide equal opportunity for employment, career development and promotion to all who are eligible, on the basis of ability, qualifications and fitness for work. Applications are welcome from all qualified individuals irrespective of disability, age, ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation or marital status.

As part of our Equal Opportunity policy the Library monitors job applications to ensure discrimination on all grounds does not occur. You will be required to complete the Equal Opportunities monitoring form, as part of your employment.

The information you provide will be treated in confidence and will not be used in any way as part of our selection process. All information you provide will be treated in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.