

# Nottingham College application form guidance notes

Thank you for your interest in working for Nottingham College. These guidance notes have been written to ensure that you are able to complete the application form and make you aware of some important procedures in the recruitment and selection process.

The guidance includes sections on:

n Equality and diversity n Information for disabled applicants n Completing the application form section by section n Sending us your application form n Our shortlisting system n The selection process and interview n Our recruitment of ex-offenders policy n Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

**Please read these guidance notes before completing your application form.**

## Equality and diversity

Nottingham College strives to create a culture and ethos where inclusion, equality and diversity are promoted and celebrated; where employment and educational opportunities are open to all; and where everyone involved with the College is treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

Our commitment to equality and diversity is written into all role profiles, and all members of staff are expected to support this commitment on a day-to-day basis.

We serve a diverse community and seek to develop a workforce that is representative of the community, at all levels and across all areas. No applicant will be treated less favourably than another on the grounds of age, gender, disability, family or marital/civil partnership status, race, nationality, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religious or other beliefs, or for any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

Our policy is to ensure that the recruitment and selection process is as fair and objective as possible. Applications are considered purely on the basis of merit. All candidates are assessed against the same criteria and asked a standard set of questions – you will not be asked questions about your domestic or personal circumstances that have no relevance to your ability to carry out the job. We appoint on the basis of the best candidate for the job, in line with our equality and diversity policy.

The front and back pages of our application form, which hold personal details and monitoring information, will be removed by Human Resources (HR) prior to the start of the selection process.

## Information for disabled applicants

As an employer, Nottingham College is committed to ensuring disabled people are treated fairly, are supported at work and able to carry out their role effectively. Disabled applicants who can demonstrate they meet the essential criteria of the job in-line with our Disability Confident commitment will be guaranteed an interview.

The criteria used to shortlist applications is selected from the person specification, it is therefore essential that applicants fully match their experience, skills and abilities, education and qualifications and continuous professional development to the person specification when completing the application form. You are encouraged to identify any requirements in your application which would enable us to make any necessary reasonable adjustments during the selection process.

The definition of disability may include something you have not considered previously, such as mental health illness, arthritis, dyslexia or diabetes. For further information or assistance, please contact HR services either by calling (0115) 838 0427 or by emailing [jobs@nottinghamcollege.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@nottinghamcollege.ac.uk)

## Completing the application form section by section

The Nottingham College application form is a standard form to be completed by all applicants for all posts at the College. It is the first stage of the recruitment and selection process and will be used to assess the suitability of candidates against the person specification and decide whether to shortlist for the interview stage. The application form is the only basis for considering your initial suitability. It is important that you complete the form as fully as possible, including all the necessary equality and diversity monitoring pages. Where possible please complete the form using black ink or typeface, the form may need to be copied or scanned and we need your content to be clear.

Please read the role profile and person specification carefully before you complete your form. It is important to complete each section of the form but you do not have to use all the space provided. Likewise please add continuation sheets where necessary. Please do not send in a CV as a substitute for any part of the form.

Remember:

- to complete all parts of the application form. If you think some parts do not apply, write *N/A* (not applicable) in the spaces provided
- to make sure the information you provide is clear, precise and easily understood and appropriate to the job you are applying for
- if you do not include information which could be relevant to your application, we cannot make assumptions about you during the scoring process
- to check with your referees that they are happy to support your application before you submit the form
- to return your application by the closing date; applications received after the closing date will not be considered.

### Personal details – front and back cover

Please ensure this section is completed in full so we are able to contact you. These pages will be removed and retained by HR services prior to your application form being sent to the panel for shortlisting.

You should declare if you are related to a board member/governor or current employee of Nottingham College. As proof of your eligibility for consideration under the terms of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, please note that you may be asked to provide the following, should you be invited to interview: a photocopy of your passport, or a valid work visa

## Data protection statement

Please ensure you read this carefully.

## Rehabilitation of Offenders Act

Nottingham College considers all staff may have some contact with, or access to, children and young people or vulnerable people who require support. As such you will be required under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 to agree to a criminal record check. You should read the detailed statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders and the Nottingham College policy and procedure on criminal records checks.

Please make sure you clearly answer the Safeguarding question on this page, 'Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence...' and if 'Yes' provide us with details and dates on a separate sheet with your application.

Mark the declaration box at the bottom of the page declaring you are not on any barred lists.

## Further and higher education

Please complete as fully as possible, giving details of qualifications obtained with dates of award.

Please note that if you are offered employment you will be asked to provide originals of any relevant examination certificates.

## Secondary education

Please complete as fully as possible, giving details of qualifications obtained with dates of award. Note that if you are offered employment you will be asked to provide relevant exam certificates for Maths and English qualifications.

## Membership of professional bodies

Please provide full details, including membership type and registration number for professional body membership.

## Employment history

Start with the most recent employer and then list all the employers you have worked for including the job title and the period you worked for them. The reason for leaving must be included.

Where there are gaps in your employment history, please account for the gaps in the *Experience* section.

## Experience and skills, abilities and competency

This is your opportunity to explain fully your suitability for the post. Remember that the panel will be using the information in your application to decide on the shortlist for interview. You should use the sections headed *Qualifications, Experience and Skills, Personal Attributes and Equality of opportunity* to fully demonstrate your suitability for the job you are applying for. You should ensure that you highlight any information that shows how you meet the requirements of the person specification.

## Equality and diversity

Nottingham College aims to ensure equality and diversity in all aspects of its activity as an employer. To monitor the effectiveness of our policies and procedures we need to record certain personal details about people who apply for jobs with us. It is for this purpose that you are asked to complete this section. The information you give will be treated in the strictest confidence and used for statistical purposes only. It will not be seen by the shortlisting panel.

## References

Your nominated referees must be able to provide sufficient information that will assist with confirming your suitability for the job. Both of your referees must be your current or most recent employer(s). Where this is not possible, you may list someone else who is qualified to comment on your performance at work or in full-time education (in the case of recent graduates/school leavers) or from a voluntary/community organisation with which you were involved. Referees should not be friends or family.

## Declaration

You need to sign (if submitting a hard copy printed form) or mark and date this final declaration.

## Sending us your application form

All applications must be completed via the College's website using the following link:

<https://www.nottinghamcollege.ac.uk/vacancies>

Application forms must be completed by the closing date shown within the vacancy details.

## Our shortlisting system

Your application form will be considered by a shortlisting panel who will review it against the person specification. This is an important document and you should try and ensure that you address its requirements within your application form. In particular you should address the following:

Qualification

Experience and Skills

Personal Attributes

Equality of opportunity

The panel will be looking for evidence from you that you meet the requirements of the person specification. This means giving examples of how you meet each of the points. Describe your relevant experience, what skills and abilities you have and can bring to the job. If you have no directly related work experience, you may consider voluntary or community work. Remember if you do not demonstrate to the panel that you can meet the criteria using the relevant parts of the application form, the panel will not be able to shortlist you.

The presentation of your application form will also be assessed at the shortlisting stage.

If you wish to apply for more than one job, you need to complete separate application forms for each specific job to make sure that each application addresses and reflects the different person specification. The shortlisting panel will assess your application in line with each area of the person specification following the structure below:

Score 0 = Criteria not met

1 = Criteria mentioned but not clearly demonstrated

2 = Criteria met

3 = Criteria very well demonstrated

For example, if the criteria was 'experience of managing a team of people', the panel would score as follows:

### Your response

### Panel score

No experience **OR** not mentioned at all 0 Experience is implied but not explicitly stated 1

Experience stated and supported by evidence **AND** 2 Experience stated and supported by evidence **AND**

further supported by specific examples and relevant skills gained as a result 3

## The selection process and interview

We aim to arrange shortlisting and interviews as soon as possible after the closing date; the interview date is most usually advertised. In most cases, if you have not heard from us within six weeks of the closing date, please assume that your application has been unsuccessful. Feedback to those applicants who are unsuccessful at shortlist stage will be given, if requested.

If you are successful in being offered an interview we will contact you giving you an outline of what will be involved in the interview process.

We will contact you by telephone and email. For all posts, you will be asked to undertake selection task(s) which may include in-tray exercises or tests, a mini teaching session, analysis of data or prepare a submission for presentation as part of the interview process. The type of test will depend on the nature of the job and the criteria to be assessed, as detailed on the person specification.

Selection for the post will be made by a panel of at least two people or, more usually, three, and will be based on assessment against the person specification. Panel members will take notes during the interview. You will have the opportunity to ask questions about the job and the benefits. The interview will be scored using the same system described for the shortlisting stage.

If you are unsuccessful at interview stage you will be notified either in writing or by telephone. All candidates who come for an interview but are unsuccessful will be offered some constructive feedback. This will be given by someone from the interview panel.

If you are offered a post, the offer will be made subject to receipt of satisfactory medical clearance, references, copies of qualifications, a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and sight of your passport. The College is committed to adhere to the DBS's code of practice; a copy of this is available on request.

## Our recruitment of ex-offenders policy

The protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults is a matter of great concern to the public and to the College in both its capacity as an employer and as a provider of high quality, safe services. The best way to guard against harm or abuse to children, young people and vulnerable adults is by careful selection and vetting procedures for staff. Part of the selection process will be to check for past criminal records so that we are aware of any criminal history and associated risk.

This section outlines the College's statement for checking staff for criminal records and the College's statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders. The following section gives a broad overview of the College's approach to using the DBS's disclosure service. **Nottingham College statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders**

As an organisation using the DBS disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Nottingham College complies fully with the DBS code of practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

### Equality and diversity

Nottingham College is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of age, gender, disability, family or marital/civil partnership status, race, nationality, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religious or other beliefs, or for any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified. We actively promote equality and diversity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

### Disclosing previous offences

A disclosure is requested for all members of staff at the College. The College's application form contains a statement that a disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position. The application form encourages all applicants to provide full details of their criminal record, which includes convictions,

cautions, reprimands and warnings, at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent on a separate sheet and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

### **Assessing the disclosure information**

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

### **Awareness**

We make every subject of a DBS disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS code of practice and make a copy available on request. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an individual from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.

**Please note: if you have been convicted of a criminal offence, or received a caution, reprimand or warning at any time, these may now be 'spent' and treated as if it never occurred. However, in the case of further education institutions, these must still be declared, no matter how much time has elapsed since the conviction. These will show up in a DBS check and you should therefore declare them in advance. Failure to do so may jeopardise your continued employment.**

You need to ensure that you declare all convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings. If you do have a conviction, caution, reprimand or warning this will not necessarily prevent you from being considered for employment and you should note that this information is not sent to the panel for the shortlisting stage.

## **Disclosure and Barring Service checks**

This is not intended to be a comprehensive guide and should be read in conjunction with the guidance issued by the DBS, their website and newsletters. Our policy and procedure on DBS checks is available on our website. If an employee has any questions about the interpretation of the College's statements or the use of disclosure information they should contact HR services who will be able to advise them.

In order to directly use the disclosure service, the College has become a registered body. This allows us to nominate countersignatories and a lead countersignatory to authorise disclosure applications. The College countersignatories are drawn from HR services (for employment situations) and the Student Support team (who are responsible for initi8).

As part of the College's registered body status, we are committed to abiding by the DBS's code of practice, produced to assist bodies dealing with disclosures. The requirements of the code include that a body should have written statements on the recruitment of ex-offenders and on the correct handling and safekeeping of disclosure information. It is also a requirement of the DBS's code of practice that all registered bodies must treat disclosure applicants who have a criminal record fairly and do not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed. The DBS's code of practice can be found on their website:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbscode-of-practice](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbscode-of-practice).