



Your guide to applying for a job with us



About this guide

As London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust is such a rewarding place to work, we get thousands of job applications each year. To give you the best chance of standing out, this guide will help you to submit a strong application.

It covers:

- 8 Steps to applying for a job in the NHS
- Your supporting statement
- References
- A positive about disabilities employer
- Declaring a criminal conviction
- Submitting your application
- What happens next

Making a good first impression

Your application form is usually the first impression you'll make with us.

So make it count. It's your best chance of securing that all-important interview. In the NHS, you can typically apply in two ways – using an online application system called 'NHS jobs', or a paper version. It's generally much quicker to apply online, and it enables you to change and submit your application more easily too.

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8 Steps to applying for a job in the NHS

1. Visit www.jobs.nhs to search through the current available jobs.
2. Register with the website. This allows you to apply for jobs and request details of current or future jobs you like the sound of.
3. Read the job advert carefully. It should give you information to help your application, as well as the salary, hours and location. Look at any attached documents too – especially the job description and person specification (often on one document). They'll tell you even more about the job, plus the skills, experience, knowledge and qualifications you need.
4. Click 'apply', which will take you to the application form.
5. Complete the personal details section. These will be saved, so you only need to enter them once.
6. Complete the equality and diversity section:
 - This information will be saved and can be re-used for future applications.
 - You don't need to answer these questions if you don't want to. Just select the 'Prefer not to say' option.
 - We use this information to make sure adverts and jobs appeal to a wide range of people. It's never seen by managers who decide who to interview, or interviewers. It's usually only seen by our HR team.
7. Complete the rest of the application form. Some of it will change for each job, some things like your previous jobs, qualifications or courses will stay the same. Unless a CV is specifically asked for, it won't be used.
8. Do a final check, then you're ready to submit your application.

Your supporting statement

Some posts have extra 'Key Questions' for you to answer. These will be included in the 'Person Specification' and relate to the job. If you don't answer them in your supporting statement, you might not be shortlisted for interview.

Your supporting statement is probably the most important section on the form. It massively affects the decision on whether or not to invite you for an interview. A good supporting statement clearly and concisely explains how you meet all the essential criteria for a post – and ideally some of the 'desirable' criteria too. If it doesn't, the manager reading it could easily assume you aren't right for the job.

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Try to give examples for the essential and desirable criteria. Think about relevant skills and experience you've gained in a paid job, volunteer role, work experience placement, school, university or other area of your life. For example, if the job asks for someone who works well in a team, you could write something like: "I worked on a group project at school. My role included working with others to write and deliver the final presentation. Teamwork was essential to its success."

Do this for each of the criteria. All person specifications are different so if you save your application form, make sure you change the information to suit each job you apply for.

Now make sure you've completed the rest of the form correctly, and included all of your work history (including work experience and volunteering), qualifications and other courses.

References

Obtaining references is one of the most difficult parts of the recruitment process. It often causes a long delay before we can offer someone a job. You can help speed this up by checking that you have:

- Included up-to-date contact details for your referees – including an email address if possible.
- Checked that your referees are happy to give you a reference.
- Informed your referees that we'll be contacting them.

There are a few points to take note of when providing referees

- You must give the names and contact details of at least two referees who can confirm the information you've given and comment on how suitable you'd be for the post you've applied for. Ideally, they should be your line managers from your most recent or current employer. Internal candidates should give their head of department. Students should give the name of their teacher/tutor.
- If you can't give referees, please tell us clearly why.
- Personal references won't be accepted and will delay the process.
- If you don't want your referees to be contacted before your interview, please tell us on your application form. However, we can't offer you the job without satisfactory references.

A positive about disabilities employer

We welcome applications from people with disabilities or a long-term health condition, and work hard to retain our 'Two Ticks' award – a quality standard created by Job Centre Plus.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) covers a wide range of conditions, including long-term health issues such as migraine, asthma, eczema, heart conditions and mental health issues. A condition is covered by the DDA if it has

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a significant negative effect on your ability to carry out day-to-day activities and has lasted, or is likely to last, for more than 12 months. If you'd like us to make any adjustments for your interview, then please make sure you complete the relevant section of the application form.

You don't have to discuss your disability or health condition at interview, but we encourage you to if you might need adjustments making for work. If you don't feel able to do this, then it's important that you discuss this with the recruiting manager as soon as possible after you receive your offer letter. This will enable us to make the preparations we need, ready for your first day.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme

As a 'Two Ticks' employer, we guarantee an interview to anyone with a disability whose application meets the essential criteria for the post. If you'd like to apply under the 'Guaranteed Interview Scheme', please tick the box on the application form and make sure you state that you have a disability in the equality and diversity section, as the scheme is only open to people who are covered by the DDA. In the supporting statement, make sure you explain how you meet all the essential criteria, giving examples where possible. If you meet them, you'll be invited for an interview.

Declaring a criminal conviction

Having a criminal conviction doesn't necessarily mean that you won't be offered a job with us. Each case is considered on an individual basis, in compliance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and the Criminal Records Bureau policy. We'll look at things like how relevant the incident was to the post you've applied for, how recent it was, and if there appears to be a pattern of offending.

It's important that you honestly answer questions about any conviction, caution, warning, reprimand or bind-over. If you don't, this is fraud and any job offer may be withdrawn, or in some circumstances you could be dismissed from a job. Depending on the post, you may also need to:

- Declare these even if they are considered spent.
- Have a Criminal Records Bureau check.
- Have an additional Protection of Children Act (POCA) check.

Submitting your application

- You can save your application at any time and come back to complete it later.
- Make sure you've answered all of the mandatory fields.
- When it's completed, make sure that spellings and dates etc. are correct – double check it and ask someone else to read it if possible. An application form is a legal document, so it's vital to complete it honestly and accurately.
- All done? Click 'Submit' before the closing date or it won't be accepted.

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Interviews

One of our recruitment team will automatically send rejection letters to anyone who hasn't answered any key questions. All other applications will be considered, for us to decide who to interview. This is known as shortlisting.

- It's important to check your email regularly to see if you've been shortlisted.
- If you are shortlisted, we'll get in touch via email (or phone, if you didn't apply online) around a week before your interview. We'll also let you know if there are any extra requirements, such as a presentation, typing test, etc.
- If you're invited for an interview, please confirm as soon as possible whether you'd like to attend.
- If you don't hear from us within 10 days, we're very sorry but this means you haven't been shortlisted.

What happens next

If you're unsuccessful in your interview, we'll let you know by email. You can get feedback on your interview from the chair of the interview panel if you'd like by contacting the recruitment administrator you've been dealing with.

If you are successful, we'll make an offer of employment subject to satisfactory references, health clearance and Criminal Records Bureau Clearance (if applicable). This formal offer will be in writing from our recruitment department. If you accept the offer, we'll ask you to confirm a start date. You'll then receive a confirmation letter before you start.

We look forward to reading your application.

Good luck!

