

APPLICATION GUIDANCE

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EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the advertised vacancy with the College.

General information about the College, Guidance Notes, Person Specification and Job Description and are enclosed for your attention.

Please return your completed application form, together with any other information relevant to the post, to:

**Personnel Department
Sutton College of Learning for Adults
St Nicholas Way
Sutton
Surrey
SM1 1EA**

Should you require further information please visit our website, www.scola.ac.uk or contact us on 020 8 770 6940.

Yours sincerely,

SCOLA Personnel Department

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

If you need this guidance in another format, please contact the Personnel Department.

THE APPLICATION FORM

We use what you tell us on the application form to help us decide who to interview. Please take your time, and fill it in fully. We enclose a person specification with this application form. This is a list of the skills, knowledge, experience or qualifications, which the job needs. When we read your application form we look for evidence to show that you have these. It is important that you give us enough detail, and examples of what you have done, to show that you do have them. Take time over this, and include all the relevant information.

Please write in black pen, or type. Use extra sheets if you need to.

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

As well as your full names, please write the title you would like us to use. Examples are Ms; Miss; Mrs or Mr.

2. EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

The person specification may ask for specific qualifications or training. List the relevant qualifications or courses you have done.

3. WORK EXPERIENCE

Your work history may include periods of unpaid and voluntary work as well as paid employment. For example you may include time as a carer for one of your family, or being a voluntary helper in a school.

Use another sheet if you need extra space.

4. PREVIOUS EMPLOYERS

List in this section all previous employers you have had, from when you started work until now. If you have not worked before, for instance you are just leaving school; write this clearly in the box.

5. BREAKS IN EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

We need you to provide us with your complete employment history, and any gaps in your employment history of more than one month should be explained – for example, carers and childcare responsibilities.

6. REFEREES

We do not use references as part of selection itself. We approach your referees to confirm what you have told us. For example, if you tell us that you have worked in your present job for three years as a care assistant, we would expect your referees to tell us the same.

We may ask for references to cover a full five year history, which may include time spent at school/further education. For this five year history please provide full postal addresses, including postcodes. If you were employed by an agency during that time we need to know the agency details and the companies that you were placed at.

Choose referees who know you well enough to comment on your skills for the job you are applying for. For each referee please say how you know the person. For example, is the person your manager, or were they your manager in a previous job? Please don't give close friends or family members as referees.

If you have been self-employed during the last five years, this means that we may need to see your tax returns for that period if you are successful. If you have been claiming benefits in the past five years we may contact the Benefits Office to verify this if you are successful.

7. RELATIONSHIPS

We do not exclude people who are related to LBS councillors, staff, or school governors, but if you are related to someone we will make sure they do not take part in the selection for this post. If we find out after appointing you that you are related to someone who interviewed you we may dismiss you. 'Related' includes cohabiting with someone.

8. STATEMENT OF SUITABILITY

This section is your opportunity to show us that you meet the person specification. Take each item on the person specification and give details of your knowledge and experience. Give specific examples of what you have done which prove your ability. If the person specification says 'Able to organise self and others to complete projects within deadlines' you must do more than say: 'I am an organised person and can work to deadlines'. Give an example by describing something that you have done which shows your organisational skills. Here is an example: 'I organised a fund-raising event for the local playgroup within six months and with a group of 5 helpers'.

The people reading your application cannot assume that because you have experience you also have the ability to carry out a task. You may have experience of managing staff for example but we need to know how you did this. You need to tell us how you managed performance and how you motivated you staff, for example.

We don't always expect you to have formal experience. We are happy for you to use examples from voluntary work, or from your hobbies and interests. If you can show that you have the ability to do tasks that will be equally acceptable. For example, to organise a meeting you need to be able to: liaise with others, book accommodation, organise refreshments and compile agendas. Again, please use another sheet if you need to.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We check our recruitment and selection to make sure that we are not unfairly discriminating against certain groups. To help us do this we ask you details about your gender, ethnic origin and whether you have a disability. The selection panel does not see this section of your form. We may collect this information electronically, using scanning equipment, and for this we do not record your name. You cannot be identified after we have collected our statistics.

1. DISABLED PEOPLE

If you are disabled please tell us on your application form what access arrangements, adaptations or adjustments would help you to carry out the job. This will help us assess you equally with other applicants.

As part of our equal opportunities policy we shortlist any disabled applicants who meets the criteria. For this reason we do tell the selection panel if any applicants are disabled.

2. DATE OF BIRTH

We ask for your date of birth because if we offer you the job we need to know this. However, it is on the removable part of the form and we do not use it as part of selection.

3. ELIGIBILITY TO WORK

We need to make sure that everyone we employ is entitled to work in the United Kingdom. If you are resident in the UK, you should have a national Insurance number. This is proof enough of your eligibility to work. You may have a permit to work in the UK, which you would need to produce before your employment with SCOLA is confirmed.

If there are any restrictions on how long you are entitled to work, please make sure you tell us when you apply for the job. This will not necessarily be a bar to your employment with us, but we must know in advance.

4. CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS, REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS AND POLICE CHECKS

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), an Executive Agency of the Home Office, provides wider access to criminal record information through its Disclosure service. This service enables organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, especially that involving children or vulnerable adults. The CRB was established under Part V of the Police Act 1997 and was launched in March 2002.

Depending on the job you have applied for, different rules apply. Some jobs involve access to children or other vulnerable people. These jobs are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which means you must give us details of any criminal convictions you have had, spent or unspent. We can ask the police to check whether you have a criminal record, and if so for what offences. We only carry out a police check if we offer you the job.

For other jobs we ask for details of any unspent convictions you may have. In all cases we treat the information you give us as confidential, and look at it in relation to the job you have applied for before making a decision. Our borough's Criminal Record Bureau & Rehabilitation of Offenders Policy is available upon request. You can get more information about the CRB at www.crb.gov.uk

DATA PROTECTION

Please note that the information you give on your application form will be held and processed by SCOLA and the London Borough of Sutton, under the Data Protection Act 1998.

OTHER INFORMATION

We will not judge you on your writing ability or your handwriting. If these skills are necessary for the job we will assess them separately.

You may have already prepared a CV and want to send that instead of answering the statement of suitability. You may send it, but you must also complete the statement of suitability. A CV does not usually describe your skills and abilities fully. It is unlikely the shortlister will be able to find enough evidence in a CV alone.

INTERVIEWS

SCOLA uses several selection methods to assess whether people meet the job criteria. We may ask you to take an ability test, do a presentation or other work related exercise. We will tell you before the interviews what methods we are using for this post. At the interview we will ask you questions related to the person specification.

JOB OFFERS

If we offer you the job, it will be subject to references and health clearance. If your references do not confirm what you have told us we may want to discuss this with you. We will also ask to see evidence of your qualifications if they are essential for the job.

We will ask you to complete a health questionnaire, which we will send to our occupational health department. It is their job to make sure that you are fit to do the job we have offered you. We may ask you to have a medical examination.

RIGHT TO WORK

Under the Asylum & Immigration Act 1996, you will be required to provide proof of your eligibility to work in the UK. We always need to see original documents. We will not appoint you until we have seen evidence – usually your national insurance number or a current work permit – that you are eligible to work in this country. If you are unsure about your status then you should contact the Home Office.

COMPLAINTS

The council and SCOLA want to ensure equality of opportunity in its recruitment and selection. If you think that you have been discriminated against during the selection process because of your race, gender, marital status or sexual orientation, or because you have a disability, you may complain and we will look into your complaint.

You must phone the Director of the department within 72 hours of being rejected after an interview. You must explain why you want to complain to the director or his/her representative. You must also put your complaint into writing. The director or his/her representative may want to talk to you and will confirm the outcome of the investigation.

To complain about the recruitment and selection process in schools you should write to the clerk to the governors at the school within three working days of receipt of your rejection/selection outlining the nature of your complaint.

SCOLA 2009
(updated Sept 2009)

GUIDANCE TO JOB APPLICANTS ON DISABILITY

Do you think that you have a physical, sensory or mental impairment or condition, which seriously affects your day-to-day life and is long-term (ie lasting, or likely to last, one year or longer)?

- This may be something for which you are taking medication, or,
- It could be a previous long-term condition, from which you have now fully recovered.

Here are some examples to help you decide if you have a long-term impairment or condition, which seriously affects your day-to-day life.

- **Hearing or visual impairment**
Not including general short or long-sightedness
- **Co-ordination, dexterity, or mobility**
eg polio, spinal cord injury, back problems, repetitive strain injury
- **Mental health**
eg depression, severe phobias, schizophrenia
- **Speech impairment**
eg stammering
- **Learning disabilities**
eg dyslexia
- **Other physical or mental conditions**
eg arthritis, asthma, cardiovascular conditions, cancer, diabetes, dyslexia, epilepsy, facial disfigurement, heart disease, haemophilia, HIV.

Why do we need to know about this?

We have made a commitment in our equality and diversity policy to respect every individual employee, which means treating them with dignity and valuing their diversity, and eliminating all forms of discrimination in employment, including on grounds of race, gender, caring responsibilities, disability, gender re-assignment, age, social class, sexual orientation and religion or belief. We cannot check how successful we are in meeting this commitment without access to specific information about employees.

Why is it important for me to declare this?

We want to ensure that all our employees are able to work in an environment where they feel comfortable and free from any potential prejudice or stigmatisation.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 describes a disability as anyone with a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial, adverse and long term effect on his or her day-to-day activities. We will look at each individual situation on its merit, responding to employees according to their needs, as well as complying with the law.

Where an employee has a condition that seriously affects their day-to-day life, we will discuss and consider any reasonable adjustments with them, which may result in a change in their working practice or circumstances. Examples could be when an employee has a period of sickness absence, which is directly associated with their condition, or where an employee cannot work as effectively unless reasonable adjustments are made to their working pattern.

What do I do now?

We would like you to voluntarily self-declare if you consider yourself to have, or have had, an impairment or condition.

Where will this information be held?

This information will be entered onto your personal record and the information will have restricted confidential access to designated staff.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Sutton College of Liberal Arts was founded in 1972 when the local authority unified its provision for adult education on a borough-wide basis.

With effect from 1 April 2001 the name of the College was changed to Sutton College of Learning for Adults. This reflects the aims of the College and embraces the culture of adult learning, which the national arrangements are seeking to promote through the Learning and Skills Council.

Early in 1974 a new college building was completed and officially opened. It forms a discrete part of the Civic Centre/Central Library complex, which is situated in the centre of Sutton. In addition to serving as the administrative centre for the College as a whole, it operates as the largest centre for adult education in the borough.

The centre is open from 9.00 am to 10.00 pm Monday to Friday and Saturday mornings during term-time, and five days per week during the rest of the year. As well as administrative offices and general classrooms, the building includes studios for Art, Jewellery, Pottery, Photography, Drama and Music; a large Arena; an exhibition area; plus an Advice centre and "Try IT" suite. There are approximately 600 courses per annum held in the centre.

Two other major day-time centres which complement the Sutton Centre are located at Wallington Town Hall and at North Cheam. In addition, there are four school-based evening centres and several other sub-centres across the borough.

Currently in the College there are several full-time and fractional lecturers and around 450 part-time teaching staff. There is a high level of administrative staffing both at the main building and at each of the main centres. The College's educational programme is primarily of a part-time, non-vocational nature but includes a significant level of examined, accredited or work-related provision.

'SCOLA' as it is generally known locally, enjoys an excellent reputation in the borough and beyond for providing high quality adult education courses. In 2008/9 it attracted 15,382 student enrolments (9,926 individuals). During the same year the College achieved 91% achievement rate. Audit Commission performance indicators show the College to have the highest take-up rate for adult education in the country. This is complemented by local council polls carried out by MORI that show an 84% public approval rate in the borough for adult education provided by SCOLA.

Whilst the College remains within the London Borough of Sutton, it has its own Governing Body with fully delegated financial and management responsibilities.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENT

The College is committed to offering equality of opportunity to all staff, students and visitors regardless of age, race, health (including Hepatitis B, HIV and AIDS status), financial and employment status, disability, age, gender, faith, marital status, social class or sexual orientation.

Positive steps will be taken to ensure that unlawful discrimination does not occur.

Effective procedures are in place to deal with complaints.

The College recognises that all areas of its activities will be involved. All staff, students and visitors are expected to behave in a manner, which is consistent with the College's policy. The College expresses its commitment to the student body via its student charter.

SCOLA actively promotes equality through its Equality and Diversity Action Plan, Disability, Race & Gender Equality Schemes & Action Plans, Disability Statement, Community Development Statement, Learning Support Policy and Guidelines, Guidelines for dealing with Harassment and various other Policies and Statements.

A copy of the full policy can be inspected at any SCOLA office or downloaded from our website. SCOLA's completed Equality Impact Assessments are published and are available on request.

SCOLA policies should not be read in isolation, but cross-referenced with all relevant London Borough of Sutton (LBS) and the College and Students policies. Please contact the centre office or visit our website for more information.

ELIGIBILITY TO WORK IN THE U.K.
GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS



In order to comply with the changes to the law on preventing illegal working the Home Office has issued guidelines to employers, which require us to ask **all** candidates to bring to interview either:

LIST ONE

Any **one** of the documents included below:

- A passport showing that you are a British citizen, or have the right to abode in the United Kingdom.
- A document showing that you are a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland. This must be a passport or national identity card.
- A residence permit issued by the Home Office to a national from a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
- A passport or other document issued by the Home Office which has an endorsement stating that you have a current right of residence in the United Kingdom as the family member of a national from a European Economic Area country or Switzerland who is resident in the United Kingdom.
- A passport or other travel document endorsed to show that you can stay indefinitely in the United Kingdom, or have no time limit on your stay.
- A passport or other travel document endorsed to show that you can stay in the United Kingdom: and that this endorsement **allows you to do the type of work we are offering** if you do not have a work permit.
- An Application Registration Card issued by the Home Office to an asylum seeker stating that you are permitted to take employment.

If you do not hold any of the above, you will be required to present TWO of the documents from either the first OR the second combination listed below:

LIST TWO

FIRST COMBINATION:

- A.** A document giving your permanent National Insurance Number and name. This could be a P45, P60, National Insurance card, or a letter from a Government agency. Documents showing a temporary insurance number (eg beginning with TN, or ending with a letter from E to Z inclusive) CANNOT be accepted.

Plus one of the following:

- B.** A full birth certificate issued in the United Kingdom, which includes the names of your parents; OR
- C.** A birth certificate issued in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or Ireland; OR
- D.** A certificate of registration or naturalisation stating that you are a British citizen; OR

- E. A letter issued by the Home Office to you which indicates that you can stay indefinitely in the United Kingdom, or have no time limit on your stay; OR
- F. An Immigration Status Document issued by the Home Office to you with an endorsement indicating that you can stay indefinitely in the United Kingdom, or have no time limit on your stay; OR
- G. A letter issued by the Home Office to you which indicates that you can stay in the United Kingdom, **and** this allows you to do the type of work that we are offering; OR
- H. An Immigration Status Document issued by the Home Office to you with an endorsement indicating that you can stay in the United Kingdom, **and** this allows you to do the type of work we are offering.

SECOND COMBINATION:

- A. A work permit or other approval to take employment that has been issued by Work Permits UK

Plus one of the following:

- B. A passport or other travel document endorsed to show that you are able to stay in the United Kingdom and can take the work permit employment in question; OR
- C. A letter issued by the Home Office to you confirming that you are able to stay in the United Kingdom and can take the work permit employment in question.

Please note: **It is NOT acceptable to produce one document from the first combination and one document from the second combination.**

PLEASE BRING ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS as photocopies ARE NOT acceptable.

We regret that if you are unable to produce the necessary documentation at the time of interview, the planned interview will be postponed. However, we reserve the right to take employment decisions based on the interviews carried out with candidates who produced the documents requested.