

We want to ensure you make the very best job of your application to be an apprentice with East Suffolk Council. So, we have put together this guide with some useful hints and tips to help you in writing your application.

Before you apply

The first thing you should do is read the job description and the person specification for the position(s) which interests you. You can access this document online, on the right-hand side of the apprenticeship advert.

The job description tells you about what the job involves and specific responsibilities you may have in your apprenticeship.

The person specification highlights what knowledge, skills and education we would like you to have. The person specification will divide the information into two columns:

- “Essential” – what we **need** you to have
- “Desirable” – what we’d **like** you to have!

You will need to use the person specification to complete the ‘My Supporting Information’ section on the application form.

Preparing to fill in the application form

Gather all the information you need before starting your application. You will need details of your academic qualifications (or predicted grades), details of any work experience and of any previous employers.

You will also need to think about two individuals to give as ‘referees’ – someone who will tell us whether they think you’ll be suitable for the apprenticeship role. This may be a previous employer, or a teacher from your school or college – make sure you ask them before you give their name and contact details. If you are successful in getting one of our apprenticeships, we will contact your named referees via email at that point.

Completing your application form

All our applications are made online via our website (www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk). In order to apply, you will need to create a Suffolk Jobs Direct account. The website will prompt you to do this when you click the ‘Apply for this job’ button on the advert page. Once you have logged in, search for the apprenticeship you want to apply for and select ‘**Apply for this job**’. The application form will then open for you to complete. It is important to keep these login details safe, as if you are invited in for an interview, you will use your Suffolk Jobs Direct account to book your interview time.

Choose a time when you are free to sit down and really focus on your application. Give yourself plenty of time to fill it in. You can save your application and come back to it at another time if needed.

Your Supporting Information

This section of the application form is the tough part, but the key thing to remember is to go through each of the bullet points in the person specification and give specific examples to support what you say. For instance, if the person specification says you must be a team player, you need to give an example of a time you have done this:

e.g. Playing in my local football team has taught me to be a great team player as we all have to pull together to get results and make sure everyone's strengths are used.

Your examples could include your experiences from school and college, any volunteering you've done, positions of responsibility held in any school clubs or groups (school council for example) or any social activities you get involved in. You could also include any projects you've been involved with – what role did you play? What did you achieve?

Here are a few hints and tips before you start:

- Read the introduction carefully and answer the questions set out.
- Don't be modest – you need to tell us what you can do and sell yourself
- Tell us what you like to do in your spare time.
- Check and check again - Good presentation, spelling and grammar all count towards making the right first impression – and don't rely on the spell check – it won't pick up "form" if you mean "from"!
- Remember, no "text speak" and make sure you include capital letters where necessary and punctuation too.
- Before you submit your form, review your application to see if you could add anything to support it.
- Save a copy of the finished version for future reference (you might want to remind yourself what you said if you get an interview).
- Ask a friend, family member or colleague you trust to review your application before hitting the 'submit' button.

The Interview

Due to the current situation, all selection interviews will be completed virtually via Microsoft Teams.

If we like what you've said in your application, we will email you and invite you to join us for a virtual interview. This will be your chance to sell yourself to us and show you are the best person for the apprenticeship. If you are selected for an interview, please ensure you:

- Find out about the council – what do we do, what services do we provide.
- Think about what questions we may ask you and try to prepare some answers for them. We'll almost certainly ask you why you've applied or why you want to work

for the Council and ask you questions related to the job description/person specification.

- Think about anything you want to know and what questions you may ask.
- Think about what you might wear – you don't need to go out and buy suit or new clothes, but jeans/tracksuits/trainers are not suitable for an interview, even a virtual one!
- You will be able to undertake your Microsoft Teams interview on a laptop, tablet or mobile phone. Make sure you check your internet connection and check your camera and microphone are both working well in advance of the interview. If you are selected for interview, HR will provide you with practical guidance on how to join the virtual interview.
- Ensure you have a quiet, well-lit space ready for your virtual interview where you will be free from interruptions. Think about what your interviewers will see when they are interviewing you – what is in the background? Are you dressed appropriately?

Finally...

We would like to wish you the very best of luck with your application. If you have any questions, please pop the HR team an email using the details below

Email: HR@eastsoffolk.gov.uk