



Application Guidance

Promoting Diversity and Inclusion

The work we do at DCMS touches the lives of people in communities across the UK, so it is really important that we reflect those communities in all their wonderful diversity. Becoming more representative of the communities we serve, and more inclusive, will help ensure we bring the widest range of perspectives to the work we do. Please refer to the candidate information pack attached to the advert for more information on our commitment to diversity and inclusion.

This guidance covers top tips to support you with your application for DCMS vacancies. The content has been created in partnership with vacancy holders across the department, but you should also refer to the candidate information pack attached to the advert for the role you are applying for, as this contains more specific information on what vacancy holders are looking for in your application.

On every advert, we include the contact details of the vacancy holder. If you have any specific questions relating to the role please contact the Vacancy Holder. If your question relates to the application process please contact the recruitment team.

If you have any questions on the content of this document please contact the DCMS Recruitment Team (recruitment.team@dcms.gov.uk).

Reasonable Adjustments

To ensure no one is put at a disadvantage during the DCMS recruitment process because of a disability, condition or impairment we offer a range of adjustments to ensure you have a positive candidate experience.

As part of your application you will have the opportunity to highlight any support you may need during the recruitment process. You can also contact the recruitment team for any questions or additional help you may need.

Reasonable Adjustments are available for all applicants, not just those applying through the [Disability Confident Scheme](#).

Examples of Reasonable Adjustments (not an exhaustive list)

- Extra time
- Interview questions in advance
- Candidate recording themselves delivering the presentation rather than delivering it during the interview
- The panel having their cameras off
- The panel posting the interview question in the chat bar as well as verbally asking the question

- Breaks
- Open questions
- Avoidance of hypothetical questions
- Sign language interpreter

CV

- **Keep your CV to less than two pages, ensure that it is easy to read and avoid spelling mistakes and acronyms.**

Spelling mistakes can be difficult to spot so please read over your application carefully. You could ask someone else to read over it for you, or use an online spell-check tool. Spelling mistakes can lead to a panel member misunderstanding your point and therefore not being able to score your application suitably.

To keep your CV succinct, include more detail on experiences that are directly relevant to the role you are applying for and less information on roles/pieces of experience that are less relevant.

A helpful way to keep your CV concise is to avoid repeating the same responsibilities for different roles. You can write “*responsibilities as listed in the previous post*” and build your experience with additional responsibilities that you had in each role.

- The ‘Essential Requirements’ listed in the advert are the skills and/or experience that are necessary to deliver in the role. **Your CV should directly reference your relevant experience in relation to the essential requirements.**

If you have experience similar to the responsibilities listed in the candidate information pack please reference this within your CV. Use every opportunity to show that you have the required skills and experience.

If your interests outside of work correlate with the work of the team you are applying to join include details about them! Your CV is the first way the panel gets to know you and we are interested in your experience both in, and outside of, the workplace.

Statement of Suitability

- **The statement of suitability is not a cover letter. It should specifically refer to the essential requirements detailed in the candidate information pack.**

It is an opportunity for you to demonstrate how you possess the experience and/or skills required for the role. Please cover as many of the essential criteria points as possible.

You may wish to make reference to the desirable skills, however, if you do not hold these skills it will **not** affect your statement of suitability score.

- **Highlight evidence of your experience which demonstrates how you meet the essential requirements listed in the candidate information pack.**
- **Think about how you structure your statement of suitability so that it is clear to the panel what criteria/skills you are referencing.**
- **Briefly address why you are interested in the position.**
- **Make full use of the available word count, which will be in the candidate information pack, and avoid bullet points.**
- **Focus on what you personally have done, rather than using 'we' or 'my team' too much.**

Behaviour Statements

As part of your application you may be asked to prepare a behaviour statement. This is looking for you to evidence how you exhibit certain behaviours which are required in order to be effective in the role. You can read more on the behaviours and how they are assessed [here](#).

Behaviours can be assessed throughout the interview process. If you are asked about a behaviour in your application, we encourage you to select **one** example of how you demonstrate the behaviour and use the **STAR** (Situation, Task, Action, Result) method to structure your response. The STAR structure ensures that your answer includes the information required to assess your example.

Situation - The situation is the challenge/issue/project **you** had to deal with.

Task - What task(s) **you** were given to do.

Action - The action(s) **you** took.

Result - What was the outcome of **your** action(s).

To ensure that you are structuring your answer effectively please follow this format in terms of how you split the available word count: 10% **Situation** 10% **Task** 60% **Action** 20% **Result**.

Where possible, use specific facts/figures/evidence so you can provide a tangible result of your work.

If word count allows, you can expand on your result to include what you would do differently or how you managed challenges.

Interview Guidance

The candidate information pack attached to the job advert will detail what to expect in your interview, highlighting which of the [success profiles](#) you will be assessed against.

Your invitation to the interview will detail whether you need to prepare anything, such as a presentation. Where presentations are used, the topic/question will be given to you in advance and should state whether or not you can use visual aids.

Behaviours

The behaviours that will be tested in the interview will be listed in your candidate information pack attached to the job advert.

You may be asked to submit a behaviour statement as part of your application and be tested on this same behaviour in interview. You can provide the same example if it is relevant to the specific question asked.

To ensure you have a solid and robust answer, ensure that your example meets the definition of the behaviour for the grade of role that you are applying for, which can be found [here](#).

All behaviour answers should be structured in the STAR format.

Situation - The situation is the challenge/issue/project **you** had to deal with.

Task - What task(s) **you** were given to do.

Action - The action(s) **you** took.

Result - What was the outcome of **your** action(s).

To ensure that you are structuring your answer effectively please follow this advised format in terms of how you split the available word count: 10% **Situation** 10% **Task** 60% **Action** 20% **Result**.

Behaviour answers should be between 5-8 minutes in length. Going beyond this amount of time may jeopardise other sections of the interview for example preventing the panel from asking follow up questions, ultimately going over time can impact your overall score. It is not necessary to give background information before starting your answer or to explain why you think it is a relevant example.

The use of data, whether that be facts or figures, can strengthen your answer and give more depth to the result element of your response.

Strengths

The candidate information pack will detail if [strengths](#) will be assessed, but it will not specify what strengths will be assessed.

There are certain strengths that complement the behaviours outlined in the candidate information pack. You can review this in the [strengths dictionary](#).

It is important to remember that scores are awarded for strengths based on what you enjoy doing and what you are good at. You should show clear willingness, desire and motivation to demonstrate the skill in your strength response.

Strengths are different to behaviour questions and the panel are not expecting a STAR formatted answer. Instead, they will look for a natural and authentic response. However, you may choose to reference an example if it would be helpful to support your response.

Strength answers are expected to be about 2 minutes long, going over this time could impact your score.