

City Early Years and Childcare

Job Description and Person Specification

Job Description

The job description should detail the purpose, tasks and responsibilities of the job. It is of great importance both in the recruitment process and the subsequent management of safe practice following appointment – for example it can help with induction and training.

The purpose of the job description is to:

- Detail the purpose, tasks and responsibilities of the post.
- Enable jobseekers to read about the position before applying for it.
- Use as a reference when short listing and interviewing applicants.
- Assist with organising and designing the new staff member's induction and training program.
- Use in appraisals as an ongoing tool throughout the employment

For new positions it is important to allow sufficient time to write up a suitable job description.

For existing positions, the job description should always be checked and reviewed before the job is advertised as over time positions can change. The job description should be updated to reflect these changes.

Writing a job description

All job descriptions should be completed in a recognised and consistent template and should clearly state all of the following:

- **Title of the post**
- **Employer details;** including: name and location of employer and where the post is based
- **Salary;** and/or grade / hourly pay
- **Hours to be worked.**
- **Responsibilities;** the position to which the post reports and the positions (if any) or numbers of staff for which the post is responsible
- **Main purpose of the job;** description of the main purpose and function of the job – try and describe this in one sentence.

- **Main tasks/ responsibilities of the job;** including the post holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people that he/she is responsible for, or comes into contact with. Use active verbs like 'writing', 'calculating', 'reporting', 'developing' instead of vaguer terms like 'dealing with' 'in charge of'
- **Scope of the job;** expanding on the main tasks and the importance of the job. Job importance can be indicated by giving information such as the number of people to be supervised, the degree of precision required and the value of any materials and equipment used
- **Probation period**
- **Final Statement***

* As positions can change and adapt over time it is wise to include a final statement on the job description. For example: "This job description was correct at time of print and gives the main responsibilities and tasks of the role, however these may change or be added to as appropriate" This allows the employer to make changes to the tasks and responsibilities without having to necessarily change the job description. If the role does change drastically however, the job description should be reviewed immediately.

Person Specification

A clear and comprehensive person specification is the key tool for successful recruitment.

The person specification enables the organisation to profile the ideal person to fill the job and provides potential applicants with information about what they will need to demonstrate to show their ability to undertake the role.

The purpose of the person specification is to:

- Detail what the person needs to fulfil the requirements of the position by providing a profile of the skills and knowledge considered essential and desirable.
- Provide information that enables job seekers to match themselves to the job role before applying
- Provide a basis for shortlisting applicants
- Provide the interview panel with the selection of criteria by which to assess the best candidate for the role
- Assist with organising and designing the new staff member's induction and training program.

For new positions it is important sufficient time is allowed to write up a suitable person specification.

For existing positions, the person specification should be regularly checked, reviewed and updated. Over time, the position's requirements can change and the person specification should reflect the changes.



Writing a person specification

As with the job description, the person specification should be completed in a recognised and consistent template and should include all the following sections.

- **Qualifications and training** required to perform the role in relation to working with children.
- **Skills, knowledge and aptitudes** that are directly related to the job
- **Experience:** the type of experience necessary
- **Competencies and qualities** that the successful candidate must be able to demonstrate (including at a minimum the ability to safeguard the welfare of children)
- **Personal qualities** that you are looking for in a person to do the job. Any criteria relating to personal qualities or circumstances must be essential and directly related to the job role and must be applied equally to all groups irrespective of sex, sexual orientation, race, age, nationality, disability, religion or belief. To do otherwise is potentially discriminatory
- **Other criteria** any other desirable competencies and qualities that are not essential but would help someone perform the role

It is important that you consider which criteria are essential and which are desirable for the position and how these requirements will be tested and assessed during the selection process.

- **Essential criteria** would be crucial to the position and only applicants that meet all of the essential criteria should be offered an interview.
- **Desirable criteria** would not be crucial to the job but would help someone perform the role and therefore be an advantage if the applicant had them. This can assist when choosing between applicants that meet all the essential criteria.

Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Statutory (EYFS) framework and the Childcare Register requirements

The EYFS framework and requirements of the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register must always be considered when writing a person specification for a particular position.

For example

- A manager should have at least two years' experience of working in an early years setting, or at least two years' other suitable experience.
- All supervisors and managers must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- Half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.



The importance of fairness

It is important to ensure that the criteria laid out in the person specification are not discriminatory in any way and allows all suitable applicants to apply.

It is very important that the skills, aptitudes and knowledge included in the person specification are related precisely to the needs of the job; if they are inflated beyond those necessary for effective job performance, the risk is that someone will be employed on the basis of false hopes and aspirations, and both the employer and employee will end up disappointed in each other.

Another good reason not to set unnecessary requirements is to avoid any possibility of discrimination against particular groups of potential applicants. The very process of writing a job and person specification should help the employer to develop and implement a policy of equal opportunity in the recruitment and selection of employees.

All the criteria given in the person specification should be assessable through the application form and at interview and assessments. Adding criteria that cannot be assessed would be an unfair recruitment process as it is important to be able to demonstrate how the successful applicant met all or the majority of the criteria on the person specification.

Supporting documents

[Job description template \[Word 44 KB\]](#)

[Person specification template \[Word 55KB\]](#)

Useful organisations

Acas Independent advice, guidance and training for employers and employees www.acas.org.uk National Helpline 08457 47 47 47





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