

GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS ON COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

Contents

Introduction	2
Guidance on Completing the Application Form	3
Guidance on completing the equality monitoring and vetting forms	8
On completing the forms	8
Shortlisting	9
Medical Screening	9
Permission to work in the UK	9
CRB Checks	9
Benefits of working at NLW	10

Introduction

The Library was established in 1907 and it is one of the great libraries of the world. It has a vast and diverse collection in various formats and is kept within a striking building that overlooks the town of Aberystwyth and Cardigan Bay. The Library is the place to go for information on Wales, the Welsh people and the other Celtic nations. As a legal deposit library it has the right to receive copies of all printed and electronic items published in the UK and Ireland. The Library receives grant-in-aid from the National Assembly for Wales and is described as a Grant Funded Public Body.

Not only is the Library a great library, but it is also much more than that. It's an unique place to work and it provides a wide range of experiences and opportunities in so many fields of interest.

Within its walls there are so many resources available on Wales and the rest of the world and its our privilege and duty to share this wealth with the public by welcoming individuals to our building at Aberystwyth and through the World Wide Web. To be able to do that the Library employs a talented and gifted workforce in various fields of interest from librarianship and archives to IT and digital technology and from public services and interpretation to services that support and preserve our collections. The Library also welcomes volunteers who give added value to the work done by employed staff.

The Library is a popular meeting place for children and young people and people of all ages. It has eight galleries, a couple of cafes, conference facilities, auditorium, and of course two modern and spectacular reading rooms.

Thank you for your interest. It was Dr Meredydd Evans who described the Library recently as “[the most intriguing place in Wales](#)”, and who knows, maybe one day, you'll be offered the opportunity to work in this unique place!

Guidance on completing the application form

Please read carefully before completing your application form.

1. Introduction

Your Application Form plays a vital role in deciding whether you will be invited to take part in the Library's selection process, therefore please:

- Read the Job Description and Person Specification carefully.
- Take time to complete it as fully and as accurately as possible. Do not underestimate the time needed.
- Show us how well you meet the requirements of the post.

2. Curriculum Vitae (CVs)

The National Library of Wales seeks to ensure that information about candidates is provided in the same format; therefore all applicants are required to complete our standard Application Form.

Curriculum Vitae will not be accepted as a substitute for an Application Form.

3. Job Description and Person Specification

The Job Description and Person Specification lists the main duties, responsibilities, knowledge, education, experience and competencies that are required for the post. Consider these carefully so that you know what the post involves and how your skills, abilities and knowledge match the requirements.

4. Completing the Application Form

4.1 Personal Details

Ensure that you complete the Personal Details section of the form accurately (e.g. full postal address, email and telephone numbers), as this is the information that enables us to contact you.

4.2 Present or Recent Employment

- Detail your current post and employer in this section. Include the date you were appointed to the post and the date you left, if applicable.
- If you do not have any previous paid or unpaid employment, please state 'None'.
- Include the grade for the post and the salary.
- Give a brief outline of your duties and responsibilities in bullet point form. Further information regarding these points can be included in the Competency section of the form.
- Include all your experience relevant to the post.
- If you are not employed at the moment or have not done so for some time, you can refer here to temporary or casual employment and/or volunteering experience, you have undertaken.

4.3 Previous Employment

- Give details of your previous employment in this section, starting with the most recent. Your current or last employment will have been detailed in the previous section, therefore there is no need to repeat it here.

- Ensure that you have accounted for any gaps in your employment history, e.g. if you took a year off for studying, please note it.

4.4 Educational Qualification

- Include all your educational qualifications, including school / college / university, course, subjects and grades.
- Provide details of membership of any professional bodies, including dates of election and level of membership.

4.5 Core ICT Skills

- Please tick all computer software/systems experience you possess. Any other relevant ICT Skills (e.g. software packages or systems) should be noted in the additional information section on the Application Form.

4.6 Language Skills

- Complete the boxes to determine your level of skill in the Welsh and English language.
- The ability to communicate effectively through the medium of Welsh is essential for many of the Library's posts. If the Job Description notes this, we expect you to complete your Application Form in Welsh and the assessment (if required) and interview will also be in Welsh.

4.7 Competencies

In this section there is space for you to give evidence showing that you have the knowledge, skills, abilities and other personal qualities required for the post. These are known as 'competencies'.

In the spaces provided on the Application Form, you will need to explain in your own words how, when and where you have put these competencies into practice. You must describe the actions that you took.

You must show evidence that you have experience of putting into use the particular competencies that are needed for the post for which you are applying. It is not enough to show that you have relevant experience. You will have been given a list of the competencies appropriate to the post.

Please note, that unless you clearly demonstrate that you meet all of the essential competencies listed for the post, you will not be invited for interview.

What are 'Competencies'?

'Competencies' were formally introduced to the Library in 2009. The key features for competencies include:

- A description of the skills and behaviours you need to perform a role effectively.
- A definition of a person's attributes, leading to different levels of performance.

Competencies are distinct from the individual objectives that are agreed as part of the performance review process. Objectives focus on what you need to achieve whereas competencies focus on the how; the skills and behaviour you need to display to be effective in a role.

How do you show competencies?

- By describing what you did, how you did it, why you did it and the affect it had shows that you understand what is required and that you are capable of doing it.
- You must show evidence of making a success of that experience by describing how you acted in particular situations and what the effect of those actions was.
- Giving examples of why and how you demonstrated the skills, knowledge and other qualities in the past shows that you have the potential to apply them in a new post in the future.
- Examples need not just come from work, but also from things you have done in your spare time with family and friends. Examples can be given from any voluntary work or education or training you may have completed.

Writing a Competency Statement

The STAR approach is useful when answering competency questions:

SITUATION	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What/Who was involved?• Problems faced, if any?• Any challenges?• Anything else?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did you do and why?• What were you thinking/feeling?• What made you decide to do that?
TASK	RESULT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What was your goal/objective?• Describe the task within the situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What changed as a result of your actions?• What did you notice happen?• What was the outcome?• If not successful what did you learn?

- As a general guide, we would expect between 150 – 300 words per competency.
- Set the scene and context for your action.
- Keep it short and to the point.
- Include evidence for all or at least most of the indicators or actions that make up the competency.
- Ensure the examples are well written, clear, grammatical and properly spelt.

Example 1

Management and Collaboration

Recognises collaborative working achievements in terms of 'we achieved that' rather than 'I achieved that'

Last spring I spent two weeks travelling around Paris with four friends. We planned the trip during the spring, fitting it in around our college work when we needed a break and something to look forward to; then took part time jobs for two months to raise the money for the trip. We had to plan where we wanted to go, where we would stay, how we would get around and how to fit everything into our very limited budget.

Once we had agreed a general itinerary we divided up the organising between us. My responsibility was to make the travel arrangements: I researched the various options and decided that an Inter-Rail ticket would be the cheapest and the most flexible, so then I had to check the rail connections and timetables between the places we wanted to visit.

Even though the trains didn't always run on time, we had a great time and visited all the places we had planned to.

Example 2

Communication

Is assertive when necessary and uses persuasion responsibly to make a case

I have been involved with the Parent-Teacher Association at the local school since my first child started there. The PTA organises a number of fund-raising events, which have involved me in persuading people to buy raffle tickets, display posters in shops, donate prizes, etc. Last year, the PTA produced a book to mark the school's 50th anniversary and, as a member of the committee, I helped to decide on the content and format of this book.

The school governors wanted an "official" history, but I represented the PTA in arguing that a collection of past pupils stories would be more readable and saleable. This was agreed and we then contacted ex-pupils through mail shots based on old school registers and features in the local newspaper and the radio. The response was excellent and the only problem was in sifting and editing the letters we were sent.

I then negotiated with local printers to find the best quote and I persuaded local shops of all kinds (not just booksellers) to sell the publication.

Example 3

Delivering Results

Plans ahead to meet objectives and deadlines

In one of my previous roles I was responsible for preparing the year-end accounts for the Collection Services Department. To achieve the required level of accuracy within the tight deadlines, I first met the Finance Director to discuss his requirements and understand the overall programme. I then organised a meeting of departmental staff to agree objectives and understand key issues. This meant that any potential problems were addressed and resolved early, and we were the first department to close our accounts.

A particular issue in this project was the accountancy breakdown for Section 31 partnerships with the ABC. I obtained signed agreements and researched accounting standards through my professional contacts. I then confirmed with the Finance Director that this would meet required standards, and was able to arrange for the necessary accounting entries to take place in good time. The auditors were very satisfied with the papers provided in the audit.

4.8 Additional Information

Please provide any additional information you feel is relevant to the post which has not been covered elsewhere within the application form.

4.9 References

All applicants are required to provide two referees. Prior to giving the names and contact details of referees please:

- Check that they are prepared for us to contact them as this saves time should you be successful in being called to take part in the selection process.
- Ensure that one referee is your current employer or your former employer if you are no longer employed by them. If this is not possible, please give an explanation why this is the case.
- Ensure that one of your referees is your Head Teacher / Tutor if you are leaving or have recently left full-time education.
- Do not use friends and relatives. If you do not wish us to take up the reference with your current employer / line manager at the time of shortlisting, please tick the 'NO' box on the form. References will be taken up if an offer of appointment is made.
- All appointments are subject to the receipt of satisfactory references and all the necessary checks being satisfied.

5. Data Protection

The information you give on this form is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998. We will keep it confidential and only use it for recruitment purposes. If we appoint you to a post, we will keep this information during the period of your employment with us. If we do not appoint you, we will keep your information for 12 months following our appointment decision and then destroy it.

Guidance on completing the Equality Monitoring and Vetting forms

As the information asked on these two forms is sensitive, it will be stored securely and treated strictly confidentially. These forms will not be made available to the Selection Panel.

Equal Opportunities

The National Library of Wales is committed to promoting equality and diversity through all its employment policies and practices. We aim to ensure that every employee, prospective employee or person connected with the National Library of Wales, will receive equally favourable treatment regardless of their gender, gender identity, marital status, sexual orientation, age, race, ethnic/national origins, colour, disability, religion or belief and membership/non-membership of a Trade Union.

Disability

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 we have a duty to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person is substantially disadvantaged by either the working arrangements or the working environment. This does not apply unless we know that you have a disability, therefore this is the section you can let us know.

If you tick 'Yes' in this section, we will contact you to discuss any specific needs you may have should you be invited to an interview.

Vetting Enquiry Form (offences / convictions and /or sentence)

The National Library of Wales undertakes security checks on all successful applicants. A conviction involves being found guilty. If you have been bound over, placed on probation or given conditional or even an absolute discharge, it does not mean that you have been found guilty of an offence. You are not required to disclose any conviction which is considered to be spent by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

On Completing the Forms

1. Please ensure that you return the Application Form, equality monitoring and vetting enquiry forms by the stated closing date as late applications will not be accepted. Completed forms should be returned to:

Human Resources Unit
National Library of Wales
ABERYSTWYTH
Ceredigion
SY23 3BU

marked 'CONFIDENTIAL – VACANT POST' or via email to: vacancies@llgc.org.uk

2. Keep a copy of your Application Form so that you can refer to it during the selection process if you are invited to an interview.

Shortlisting

The recruitment process is very competitive and we are seeking to shortlist those applicants who have clearly demonstrated via the Application Form that they meet the requirements of the post. After the closing date, the Selection Panel reads all Application Forms (minus the equality monitoring and vetting forms) very carefully in order to decide upon which candidates are to be invited to an interview.

Shortlisted candidates will be notified to attend the interview within 3 weeks of the closing date. The notification will be by letter or, if time is short, via the telephone to inform candidates of the following:

- The date and time
- The venue
- The likely duration
- Who will conduct the interview
- The form the interview will take
- Whether there is to be a test administered
- Any other relevant information which may be helpful to the candidate
- The need to inform Human Resources if there are any special requirements that the candidate may require
- The need to confirm their attendance at the interview

Details of contacting the successful applicant will be given during the interview.

If you are unsuccessful you will be advised in writing. If you require feedback on how to improve your application in the future, please contact the Human Resources Officer.

Medical Screening

All successful candidates must be screened for fitness to undertake the post. You will be given a medical questionnaire to complete, which our Occupational Health provider will assess. Complete the form as fully as possible, giving details of any illnesses as requested on the form. No confirmed offer of appointment will be made unless the successful applicant has been given medical clearance.

Permission to work in the UK

You must be legally entitled to work in the UK and not subject to immigration control. If we offer you the post, we will check your passport, identity card or other relevant documents prior to confirming your appointment.

CRB Checks

Some of our posts, especially those involving children or vulnerable adults, will need a criminal record check. You will be notified of this during the interview. No confirmed offer of appointment will be made unless the successful applicant has been given a CRB clearance.

Benefits of working at the National Library of Wales

The Library offers an excellent employment experience for its employees:

- Excellent location and working environment
- Competitive salary
- Pension Scheme (currently final salary)
- 27 days annual leave (30 days annual leave Band 5 and above)
- 8 days statutory bank holidays
- 3 privilege days
- Family friendly policies
- Subsidised restaurant
- Discount in the Library shop
- Formal team briefing system to enhance communication
- Opportunities for training and promotion
- Staff Counselling Service
- Childcare Voucher Scheme
- Cycle to Work Scheme

Hours of Work

In summary, a full time post has a working week of 37 hours. The Library operates a flexible hours scheme with the following bandwidths:

FLEXIBLE TIME	-	8.00am to 10:00am
CORE TIME	-	10:00am to 11.45am
FLEXIBLE TIME	-	11:45am to 2.15pm
CORE TIME	-	2.15pm to 3.00pm
FLEXIBLE TIME	-	3.00pm to 6.15pm

TOTAL DURATION OF WORKING DAY: 8:00am to 6.15pm

Trade Union Membership

Every member of staff has the right to join a Trade Union. The Trade Unions in the Library, Prospect, PCS and FDA, form part of the structure of the Library's Whitley Council whose role is to discuss grievances and matters which affect the Library's staff and ensure a link between the Library's Board and the staff.