

Employment - Writing a selection criteria

When applying for positions in the public sector, they will more often than not ask you to respond to selection criteria. These are the skills and qualities the employer is looking for, so it is important to show that you meet these standards as closely as possible.

Setting out the selection criteria

Setting out your responses is a crucial part of the process, and one of the best ways to present your answers is by creating a new page for each point with the statement written at the top in **bold**. This approach makes it easy for the selection panel to examine your application and it also shows a high level of organisation.

For example:

SC 1 Demonstrated skills in data entry, spreadsheets and word processing

Your response should be written underneath. This should be put in full sentences using a font size of between 10 and 12 points. To make things clear for the selection panel, you could use features such as:

- Bullet points
- Underlining
- Bolding **specific** words
- *Italics*

Preparing your responses

In the job description there is usually a statement of duties and general information about the organisation. It is important that you read the whole document, because you may gain some insight into how they expect the skills to be used in the workplace (duties, responsibilities, objectives). See fact sheet '*Reading a Position Description*'. When you begin to write your responses, you really want to make your examples reflect these as closely as you can.

After reading the material, if you are not clear about what the employer means in a particular section or you have other questions about the position, the best thing to do is ring the contact officer. The importance of doing some background research on the organisation and the position before you put pen to paper can't be understated.

Include as much relevant information as possible

You need to provide enough relevant information to allow a selection panel judging your application to put you forward to the next stage – usually an interview. The information they are looking for should be clear and easy to read, they should not have to spend time trying to find the areas that relate to the job on offer.

When thinking about what information to include, it is important to look beyond work experience. For example, there are many skills that you might have gained while studying, in your dance and/or in your extracurricular activities that will be of interest to a prospective employer.

The formula below is one way of making sure that you answer each point fully.

Step	Explanation	Example
Opening statement	This should state why you meet the criteria	<i>In my current position as administrative assistant I am responsible for...</i>
Supporting statement	This should state how you meet the criteria	<i>Throughout this period I co-ordinated...</i>
Validity statement	This is where you need to show that what you did was of value. What was the result? Who can confirm that it was a success?	<i>As a result, processing turnaround time has been substantially been reduced...</i>
Concluding statement	This is used to tie up and reinforce how and why you meet the criteria	<i>This clearly demonstrates my ability to...</i>

When addressing the selection criteria you will most likely use several examples to demonstrate that you have the experience, skills, abilities and/or knowledge required. In which case, you will loop through the **opening, supporting** and **validity** statements several times within the one selection criterion. This will also occur when you have several parts to a selection criterion and you wish to answer each part separately and provide examples.

Final points

- Put your name and contact details in the header/footer
- Ensure you spell check and make sure the sentences read well
- Number every page
- Don't undersell yourself. If you are ever going to brag, now is the time!