



# Applicant Guide



## Introduction

The Department of Health is committed to providing safe, high quality and sustainable health to the people of Tasmania. When you join the Department, you are joining a team of people dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians. Our work affects almost every Tasmanian. It can be challenging, but also very rewarding. When you work with us you can be sure that what you are doing makes a positive difference, with patients and clients at the centre of everything we do.

The Department of Health aims to be an employer of choice, offering a stimulating, rewarding and supportive workplace. In return our workers need to maintain the highest standards of integrity and operate within the legal frameworks and values that set clear standards for our behaviours and actions.

The Department of Health offers a diverse range of careers across the State and attractive benefits, including access to salary sacrifice and salary packaging (for eligible employees), flexible work arrangements and a commitment to professional development. As an applicant for a role in the Department of Health these guidelines are provided to assist you to provide a strong application.

Please note, the information contained in these guidelines is of a generic nature. If it in any way contradicts advice you receive from the panel or the recruitment team, please defer to their instructions rather than these guidelines.

## Merit Principle

Employment decisions in the Department of Health are undertaken according to the merit principle. Merit selection involves comparing an applicant's work-related qualities with the work-related qualities genuinely required to perform the duties of the position. By ensuring employment decisions are based on merit, all applicants are given a fair and equal chance to gain employment within the Department of Health.

### *Work-related qualities can include:*

- *skills and abilities*
- *qualifications, training and competencies*
- *standard of work performance*
- *capacity to produce required outcomes*
- *relevant personal qualities*
- *demonstrated potential for further development*
- *ability to contribute to team*



## Workforce Diversity

The Department of Health values workforce diversity and recognises the value each person offers which is shaped by their unique characteristics, background, experiences, knowledge, skills, values and perspectives. Workforce diversity focuses on recognising, embracing and valuing everyone's differences to create an inclusive workplace environment which is free from discrimination and harassment.

The Department of Health is supportive of reasonable adjustments which may be required as a result of a physical, psychological or neurological disease or disorder, illness or injury to enable applicants to compete for employment on an equal basis. If you require any adjustments, you are encouraged to advise the contact person and/or Selection Panel at any point throughout the selection process.

## Statement of Duties (SoD)

The Statement of Duties (including the Selection Criteria) is attached to the job advertisement for the vacancy. The information provided in the SoD will help you make an informed decision about how suitable a match there is between you and the role. They are also the core information the panel will use to guide their decision making to ensure their selection is based on merit.

### **Essential requirements**

Essential requirements are additional elements which the successful applicant must hold in order to successfully undertake the duties and responsibilities of the position.

Some examples of the most common essential requirements are:

- academic or professional qualifications
- driver's licence
- professional registration/licensing

- pre-employment checks (such as conviction)

Where an essential requirement is approved for a role, the occupant must have and maintain the requirement to be, or continue to be, employed in the role.

Evidence of your ability to satisfy any applicable essential requirements should be submitted with your application (other than conviction checks, identity checks and eligibility to work checks as these are undertaken by the Department of Health). Alternatively, you may be asked to provide copies of any required documentation during selection methods. Essential requirements must always be verified and/or finalised prior to the finalisation of a selection process.

### **Desirable Requirements**

Positions may also include desirable requirements. Desirable requirements are not an essential part of a position's requirements but may be beneficial to the position. A person does not have to hold the desirable requirement in order to be the successful applicant.

## Applying for a Position

### **Your application**

A separate application must be submitted for each position you wish to apply for. It is important to prepare a concise application demonstrating how your work-related qualities make you suitable for the position.

To help prepare your application you should read the advertisement and the Statement of Duties and discuss any queries you may have with the contact person listed in the advertisement so that you are fully informed of the requirements of the position before submitting your application.

An official translation should accompany any information provided as part of your application or throughout the selection process which has been provided in a language other than English.



**Hint** – Proofread your application, then proofread again. It can also be beneficial to ask someone else to proofread your application for you.

### **Selection Criteria**

A Short Form Application is a document no more than two A4 pages which, along with your résumé, will be used to make an initial assessment of your suitability for a position and determine if you will be invited to participate in further forms of assessment for the role, for example an interview.

### **What to include in your Short Form Application**

In asking for a Short Form Application the selection panel is aware that it is impossible to include details of all your skills, knowledge, and capabilities in such a short amount of writing. The panel will not be expecting too much from you, so do not try to include more in the two pages than the panel asks for. Unlike the longer form of written application, in which applicants are asked to submit a piece of writing against each selection criterion, the Short Form Application does not ask for writing specifically organised against the selection criterion. Instead use the Statement of Duties and Selection Criteria as background information and context to inform your writing.

To supplement the information asked for in the Short Form Application the panel will also ask you to submit your résumé. The WHAT section below gives pointers that may be useful as you put your résumé together. Your Short Form Application does not need to be in the format of a letter and should not be accompanied by a separate cover letter. Only provide additional documents when they are requested by the selection panel.

Use your Short Form Application to give the selection panel an insight into how well you would be able to perform in the role now and into the future. The following WHAT:HOW:WHY model is one way you can do this.

### **WHAT (Résumé)**

The panel want to know what you have done in the past that is relevant to the role. The suggested document for presenting this information is your résumé. Please include in your résumé what you feel is relevant for the panel to know. As a minimum include the following:

- Succinctly list the skills you have that will support you to do the role
- Give a history of your relevant work experience
- List your relevant education, qualifications and/or training history
- Include the names and full contact details of 2 referees who are willing to be asked about your capacity to perform the role
- For senior roles it would be valuable to include significant achievements

Keep your résumé succinct with clear headings and dot points so it is easy for the selection panel to see and find information.

### **HOW (Short Form Application)**

The panel want to know how you think and act. The suggested document for presenting this information is the Short Form Application. Think about the role and what will be required of someone to do it well now and into the future. Think about what you will be doing and what you will need to accomplish. In essence, put yourself into the role. Then write about how you think and act in relation to what the panel have asked you to focus upon. One way to present how you think and act is to give an example of a real-life situation focusing on how you handled it. For example:

Example 1:

*“Performing [insert] tasks in my role at [insert] I had the opportunity to do [insert]. I approached this by*



thinking about [insert] then took the following action [insert] in the following way [insert]. This resulted in [insert].”

Example 2:

“My experience in doing [insert] has given me capabilities in [insert]. As such when I approach [insert] type of tasks I consider [insert] then act in the following ways [insert].”

Sometimes the panel may have given you one or two specific questions to answer, alternatively they may have asked you to focus on a limited number of selection criteria, or possibly on all of the selection criteria. The key thing they will be looking for is an insight into HOW you go about achieving the types of things that need to be achieved in the role.

### **WHY (Short Form Application)**

The panel want your take on why they should choose you. The core document for presenting this information is the Short Form Application. As a guide this would be roughly a quarter of your Short Form Application. Finish your Short Form Application by telling the panel why you are attracted to the role and why you would be a good fit for it. This is about giving the panel an insight into what you will bring to the future of the role. For senior roles an indication of your vision for where you want to take the role would also be appropriate here.

## **The Selection Process**

The role of the Selection Panel is to develop a recommendation on which applicant(s) are most suited for the position based on their work-related qualities and applying the merit principle. A selection panel will assess the applications and create a shortlist of applicants to progress. If shortlisted, a panel member will contact you to arrange further assessment. You are welcome to phone or email the contact person to discuss the

progress of your application at any point during the process.

### **Selection Process Outcomes**

Once the panel have made a recommendation for appointment, all applicants will be advised of the outcome in writing.

If you are the successful applicant, you will be notified of the outcome by phone and receive an offer of employment email. Where applicable offers are conditional, subject to the satisfactory completion of any pre-employment checks, verification that you meet any essential requirements and, a review period.

Once the pre-employment checks have occurred, and a review period has passed (if applicable), you will receive formal employment documentation, along with orientation and payroll related information.

If you are unsuccessful, we encourage you to seek feedback from the panel which can help you understand their decision and how you may improve your future applications or interview performance.

## **Common Questions**

*Can I write more than two pages?*

For fairness and equity this is not encouraged, and some panels may impose a strict adherence to the two-page limit and not read additional information. Within the two-page limitation, please use a clear readable font size and adopt conventional page margins. Allow time after completing your first draft to review and edit your submission. Often good editing will allow you to reach the two-page limit if your first draft is over length.

*How important is my résumé?*

It is very important that your résumé compliment, and work with, the information you provide in your Short Form Application. The selection panel will read both documents



together so it is not necessary to repeat information in your Short Form Application that can easily be seen in your résumé. Use the WHAT information in the model above to guide what you include in the résumé.

*How long should my résumé be?*

No length restriction is placed on the résumé although most are no longer than 4 pages.

*How important are my referees?*

When the Short Form Application is used selection panels place a large degree of importance on the information they gather from your referees. Ask people to be a referee knowing the panel is likely to question them deeply about your capabilities. Make sure your referees understand the importance of the role they are taking on.

*Should I include a cover letter?*

No. It is not necessary to include an additional cover letter as all the information needed to identify the role you are applying for and your personal details will be captured through the electronic process of submitting your application.

*Can I submit a late application?*

Applications should be received by the closing date. If you cannot submit your application by this time, you must call the contact officer to see if a late application will be accepted and to determine an alternative time for submission. Late applications will only be accepted at the Selection Panel's discretion.



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