



# Recruitment & selection information for applicants

## FACT SHEET

*Positions advertised by Clarence Valley Council must be submitted online. Applications will only be accepted in response to advertised positions.*

*When preparing your application you must read and follow the instructions provided within this Fact Sheet and the How to Apply for a Job with Council booklet. You must also refer to the relevant position description.*

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### How to apply for positions with Council

Council bases its recruitment of employees on merit. The candidate who best meets the selection criteria is the one who will be given preference for appointment to the position.

When applying for a position, it is important to prepare an application that demonstrates why you are the best person for the job and how your skills, knowledge and experience match the selection criteria.

As a result it is essential that you download the Position Description in order to prepare your application.

Applications will only be accepted in response to advertised positions.

### Preparing your online application

Once you start your online job application you cannot save and return to it later.

You may wish to prepare your responses in a Word document to save and edit them over time. You can then COPY and PASTE your answers from Word into the selection criteria fields in the online job application.

You may be requested to attach your resume. If so, have your resume saved on your computer ready to attach (refer *Preparing your resume* later in this Fact Sheet).

### Lodging your application

Applications must be lodged online via Council's website by 4.00pm sharp NSW time on the advertised closing date.

The vacancy will be removed from the website after 4.00pm. It is therefore critical you adhere to these timeframes.

It is recommended you do not wait until the last minute to submit your application in case you

misinterpreted the time or encounter technical problems.

We **do not** accept hard copy posted, faxed, hand-delivered or emailed applications.

Please also follow the instructions in the *How to apply for a job with Council* Fact Sheet regarding lodging an application online.

### Late applications

Late applications will only be considered in extenuating circumstances. Requests for late submission will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Manager Human Resources.

### Selection criteria

All Clarence Valley Council position descriptions list essential and desirable criteria. The criterion describes the skills, knowledge and experience needed to do the job.

Applicants need to provide written responses to both the essential and desirable selection criteria. These responses should demonstrate, with relevant examples, that you have the required experience, skills and ability to do the job.

You could use the following five steps to assist you to write your response:

1. Open with a positive opening statement explaining why you have the required skill.
2. Provide an outline of a situation where you have used this skill.
3. Outline your role or responsibilities in this situation.
4. Outline in detail the actions you took to achieve the tasks.
5. Describe the result/s of your actions.

Remember to only use relevant examples, be concise and use dot points where appropriate. Responses should be easy to read with correct spelling and grammar.

### Some key words used in the selection criteria

- Demonstrated knowledge or skill - you need to give examples that prove you have this area of knowledge or possess the particular skill.
- Ability to - you do not need to have done this kind of work before, but your skills, knowledge and experience must show that you are capable of doing this part of the job. Describe things you have done which prove you could do this kind of work.
- Experience in - you have to show you have done this work before. Give examples.
- Effective, proven, highly developed, superior - these are all asking you to show your level of achievement. Give as much detail as you can while remaining succinct. Use examples of your achievements to show your level of skills, knowledge and experience.
- Sound communication skills - this is about showing you have the communication skills needed to do the job. You could include: experience in dealing with people, details of things you have written, and examples of problems you have solved using your communication skills.

### Probation

Positions with Council are subject to a probationary period. Probation periods allow time to assess an employee's performance, behaviour, organisational fit and capacity to undertake the required duties prior to confirming the ongoing appointment.

Generally a probationary period is 3 months. However there may be times when an employee's performance or fit cannot be effectively assessed within 3 months and Council may apply a longer probationary period to such employees.

### Criminal history check and/or working with children check

Some positions may require a Criminal History Check or Working with Children Check as part of the selection process. If required, reference to these essential or desirable criteria will be included in the position description.

The submission of an application will be taken as consent to undergo a Criminal History Check, which is initiated by Council.

The NSW Commission for Children and Young People's New Working with Child Check became effective in NSW in early 2013.

The New Working with Children Check is 'owned' by the employee rather than Council and therefore

it is the responsibility of the applicant to gain the clearance. Where required, applicants must provide their Working with Children Check Number.

### Referees

Your referees should have supervised you in a position requiring performance of the skills/duties which you claim to have previously performed, and which align with the duties required of the position on offer.

It is acknowledged that this may not be possible for new entrants to the workforce, in which case the most relevant referees should be supplied.

Applicants with prior Council service will be required to provide details of their former Council supervisor. Work performance during earlier engagements will be taken into consideration in the selection process.

Personal referees are not usually required.

You should advise your referees that you have applied for the position and provide them with an understanding of what the position entails in order that they may respond appropriately to the questions the Selection Panel may ask them.

### Contact with Councillors

Councillors may only be used as referees where a genuine employer/employee or business relationship outside of Council exists and the applicant can substantiate such an association.

Applicants who contact a Councillor to advance their application in circumstances other than this will be immediately disqualified from being appointed to the position.

### Preparing your resume

A resume is used to present your background and skills to an employer. It should direct attention to those aspects of your background that are directly relevant to the position for which you are applying and should provide a concise, adequate and accurate description of your employment history and skills.

Generally a resume will contain the following components:

#### **Personal details**

*Your e-mail address*

*Your postal address*

*Your contact phone numbers*

#### **Objectives**

*Include any key personal or career objectives*

## **Education**

List schools or universities attended, dates of attendance, qualifications or certificates attained, or other training courses attended

## **Experience**

For each company you have worked for include your position title, the commencement and finishing dates, your responsibilities and the skills required:

Company name  
Job title  
From – to  
Position responsibilities  
Skills applied

Repeat this for each position

## **Referees**

List the referee's name, the company they work for and position they hold, their contact details and their relationship to you, e.g. your supervisor, whilst you held a particular position.

## **The interview and selection process**

Selection is done by a panel of usually three people (with gender balance). One person will be an 'independent' (a person from outside the immediate work group). Selection involves the following:

### **Shortlisting**

The Selection Panel will assess all applications against the essential and desirable criteria to decide who will be interviewed. Applicants who *best meet* the selection criteria will be considered.

If you are shortlisted for the job you will be contacted via email and requested to attend an interview. You may be asked to provide some documents (e.g. evidence of qualifications, birth certificate).

### **Interview**

The Selection Panel may use a number of methods to assess your ability to do the job, including work samples or tests. You will be advised if there will be a test or exercise as well as the interview.

When answering interview questions remember:

- think before you answer - take your time;
- if the question is unclear, ask for it to be repeated or explained;
- try to give examples from your experience with each answer;

- give complete answers – do not omit details that you have included in your application or assume the panel will comprehensively remember your application.

At the end of the interview, ask any questions you have about the job. You may wish to restate your major strengths, adding anything that has been left out.

### **Referee checks**

Your referees will be contacted if you are one of the preferred applicants for the position.

### **Pre employment medical**

The conduct of a pre employment medical (at Council's expense) is part of the selection process. If you are required to undertake the medical you will be contacted after the interview has been conducted.

## **What happens then?**

If you are the successful applicant for the position you will be contacted by the Chairperson of the Selection Panel with a job offer. This offer will then be confirmed in writing. Should you wish to accept the position you may accept the position verbally, however you will also need to respond in writing.

If your application is unsuccessful following an interview, you will be advised firstly by telephone and then by letter.