

Useful tips

- Write each application for the role that is being advertised. Do not copy and paste from your CV or from previous job applications
- Be realistic when applying for a job. If a role asks for substantial experience in something, you will need to prove that you have that
- Demonstrate that you know and understand the organisation you are applying to. For example, with the Whitechapel Gallery you should have visited the current exhibition and have an understanding of the work that it undertakes. This is important for all applications
- Focus less on the opportunities that the role would give you, but more on what you could bring to the role
- If there is one criteria that you don't have - think creatively. For example if one of the 'essential' criteria is customer service, and you don't have any customer service experience, you could talk about what a relevant experience, such as a time in your life when you successfully dealt with a difficult person.
- Do not assume that the shortlisters know about your experience - spell it out!
- The shortlisters will compare your application to each of the 'essential' criteria in the person specification. You should address each of these in the personal statement. This is the most important part of the application form
- It's not about your personality. Limit your personal interests - consider excluding experience or skills that are not relevant to the role you are applying for
- Always include a paragraph about why you want to work for the Whitechapel Gallery (or relevant organisation)
- Proofread thoroughly
- The shortlisters may have a lot of applications to get through - make it easy for them by writing your personal statement using the 'essential' criteria as headings
- Get someone else to read your application
- Clearly demonstrate exactly how you meet each of the 'essential' criteria in the person specification. It sounds deceptively simple, and you may think you already do this, but it is actually quite hard to do well. You should use a specific example and explain what you did, where you did it, how you did it and, crucially, what the consequence was of what you did. A few examples are in the box below:

How to give examples:

Good written communication skills

This is something that appears on the person specification of many jobs. A poor response to this would be to write 'I have good written communication skills'. A better example would be to write 'I have good written communication skills - I use these to write regular articles in the staff newsletter'. An excellent example is to write 'I have good written communication skills, for example at Whitechapel Gallery I wrote an article in the monthly newsletter to increase awareness about education work, which resulted in 3 new volunteers for Family Day.'

Well organised

A perfectly acceptable response might be 'I use Excel to monitor staff absence'. An excellent example would be 'I created an Excel spreadsheet to monitor holiday and sickness absence for all Whitechapel Gallery staff, replacing paper records. This resulted in a reduction in my administrative work and in more efficient reporting'