***Due to emails being stopped by our security system and to ensure your application does not get quarantined, please include the Campaign Reference and the Campaign Name on the subject line of the email when submitting applications****.*

**APPLICATION FORM**

**NRS14639 Counsellor/Therapist (National Counselling Service)**

**National Supplementary Recruitment Campaign**

* Please read the Job Specification which provides useful information about the requirements of this role.
* Please ensure you download, read and fully understand the ‘Additional Campaign Information’ document specific to this campaign that is available on <http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/jobs/job_search/>.

# Please ensure you read the instructions for the completion of this Application Form and complete all areas, in full. Failure to complete all areas of the Application Form will result in you not being brought forward to the interview stage of the selection process.

* You must submit your application form via email only and we will accept the application form unsigned. You will be required to sign the General Declaration at a later date.
* Candidates should note that there can be a time delay in receiving email applications. We recommend that applicants wishing to return an application by email should allow a minimum of 1 hour for their application to arrive by **12.00 noon** onthe closing date**.** Applications will not be accepted after this date and time, no exceptions will be made.
* To ensure that you do not miss out on any email communication it is highly recommended that you check your spam and junk folder on a regular basis. In addition to reduce the possibility of emails from the NRS team being directed to spam we recommend that you add the HSE web domain to your WHITELIST. Pleases see the additional campaign information document for more information.
* It is preferable that Application Forms are typed.
* **As we are only accepting applications by email applications must be submitted in a Microsoft Word format only**. Applications stored on personal online storage sites, e.g. Onedrive, Cloud, Dropbox, Google Drive etc will not be accepted. Applications submitted in other file formats e.g. Google Docs will not be accepted. Please pay particular attention to ensure that your application is attached as an attachment (not a link to an online storage site e.g. Google Drive) when emailing your application. **In order to ensure that your email is not quarantined your email attachments should not exceed a 3mb limit. If you are required to submit supporting documentation with your application form which exceeds 3mb you must reduce the size of the documentation by compressing (zip) the documents otherwise your email may not be received by the closing date of the campaign.**
* In relation to details of employment, if the space provided is insufficient, please attach additional pages ensuring to use the same format.
* The Health Service Executive will run this campaign in compliance with the Code of Practice prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA). The Codes of Practice are available on the CPSA website [www.cpsa.ie](http://www.cpsa.ie/). Further information is also available in the Additional Campaign Information document.
* The Health Service Executive is an Equal Opportunities Employer.
* The Health Service Executive recognises its responsibilities under the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Closing Date & Time** | Wednesday 12th March 2025 at 12 noon |
| **Return application forms by email to** | [applyalliedhealth@hse.ie](mailto:applyalliedhealth@hse.ie), using the subject line **NRS14639 Counsellor/Therapist**  **Please note that you must submit your application form via email only.**  Email applications will receive a response within 2 working days, which will let you know that we received your email. **If you have not received an email response within 5 working days, we highly recommend that you contact the NRS via email to** [**applyalliedhealth@hse.ie**](mailto:applyalliedhealth@hse.ie) **to verify that your email has been received.** |
| **For queries on the Recruitment Process** | Please contact the NRS Help Desk on 0818 473677 (for candidates calling from outside Ireland +35341 6859506) or by email on [asknrs@hse.ie](mailto:asknrs@hse.ie)  For queries specifically relating to the role please contact the named person on the Informal Enquiries section on the Job Specification |
| **Anticipated Interview Date(s)** | Proposed interview dates will be indicated at a later stage. Please note you may be called forward for interview at short notice**.** |

**APPLICANT DETAILS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Position Applied For: | Counsellor/Therapist (National Counselling Service) |
| Campaign Reference No.: | **NRS14639** |
| **Personal Details** |  |
| First Name: |  |
| Last Name: |  |
|  |  |
| Postal Address for Correspondence: |  |
|  |
|  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Mobile Telephone **(mandatory)**: |  |
| Contact Telephone No. 2: |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Email Address **(mandatory)**:  (You may provide more than one) |  |

**European Economic Area (EEA)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Please select one of the following:** | **** |
| I am an EEA National |  |
| I am a British National |  |
| I am a Swiss National |  |
| I am a Non-EEA National |  |

**If you are a non-EEA citizen you must provide the requested documentation to support your application**. Please see Appendix 2 of the ‘Additional Campaign Information’ document for further information and for a definition of an EEA National.

In order to help us gauge the efficiency of our advertising strategy for this campaign, we would appreciate if you indicated below where you saw the campaign advertised. *+*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| HSE Website |  |
| Word of mouth – my manager/colleague |  |
| Notification from Career Hub |  |
| LinkedIn |  |
| Websites |  |
| Other – please say which |  |

*+ More than one indication is allowed.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Do you have a special need that might require you to be considered for an online interview? | Yes |  | No |  |
| Candidates who wish to be considered for an online interview must outline their request and application stage and provide documentation to support their request. Please refer to Appendix 6 of the Additional Campaign Information for further information on online interview requests and the required documentation that must be submitted. **NB Please note, that due to limited resources, we cannot guarantee that all requests for online interviews will be met.** We will prioritise applicants who have a medical need or those who would otherwise have to undergo an inordinately long journey as well as prohibitive costs to attend an interview in person. | | | | |

1. **Current Contractual Status**
2. **I am directly employed by the HSE, TUSLA, other statutory health agencies\*, or a body which provides services on behalf of the HSE under Section 38 of the Health Act 2004**

**Yes**  **No**

If you answered Yes to the above question, please choose the option below which best matches your current contractual status:

**I have a permanent contract**

**Or**

**I have a temporary contract**

1. **I am employed by a Recruitment Agency and am currently placed in the HSE, TUSLA, other statutory health agencies\*, or a body which provides services on behalf of the HSE under Section 38 of the Health Act 2004**

**Yes**  **No**

**If you are employed by a Recruitment Agency and are currently placed in the HSE, TUSLA, please tick the HSE / TUSLA Area in which you work:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dublin Mid Leinster |  | South |  |
| Dublin North East |  | West |  |

1. **I do not currently work in the HSE, TUSLA, other statutory health agencies\*, or a body which provides services on behalf of the HSE under Section 38 of the Health Act 2004**

**Yes**  **No**

\* A list of ‘other statutory health agencies’ can be found:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/9c9c03-bodies-under-the-aegis-of-the-department-of-health/?referrer=http://www.health.gov.ie/about-us/agencies-health-bodies/>

**HEALTH REGION CHOICE**

It is the intention of the National Recruitment Service to form six separate panels as a result of this campaign for Counsellor/Therapistone for each Health Region.

These panels will be used to fill current and future, permanent and specified purpose vacancies of full or part-time duration.

Candidates can choose a maximum of two Health Regions. Eligible applicants will be interviewed based on these choices and separate panels will be formed by Health Region in order of merit.

Please note we cannot accept changes to Health Region choice after the closing date and time for the receipt of applications, therefore, you should choose the Health Region in which you would most like to work.

Please indicate your Health Region choices from the options listed below. Candidates can choose a **maximum of two** Health Regions. If you do not specify at least one area you will not be called forward to interview.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Geographical Area** | **Please tick as appropriate** |
| **Area A - HSE Dublin and North East**- North Dublin, Meath, Louth, Cavan\*\*, and Monaghan |  |
| **Area B - HSE Dublin and Midlands**- Longford, Westmeath, Offaly, Laois, Kildare, and parts of Dublin South and Wicklow\* |  |
| **Area C - HSE Dublin and South East**- Tipperary South, Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow, Wexford, Wicklow, part of South Dublin |  |
| **Area D - HSE South West**- Kerry and Cork |  |
| **Area E - HSE Mid-West**- Limerick, Tipperary and Clare |  |
| **Area F - HSE West and North West**- Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim\*\*, Roscommon, Mayo, and Galway |  |

Please note, the NRS may conduct separate interviews for each of the different Health Regions. This means that the panel go live dates for each of the panels may be different and you may have to complete more than one interview if you have applied for more than one Health Region.

*\*West county Wicklow: West county Wicklow continues to be aligned with Kildare for health services*

*\*\*West county Cavan: A small portion of west county Cavan continues to be aligned with Sligo/Leitrim for health services*

**QUALIFICATIONS & ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Please indicate below how your qualifications and professional experience meet the eligibility criteria for the role. **Please note that if you omit information in this section pertinent to the eligibility criteria you will be deemed ineligible and subsequently not called forward to interview.** Please complete each section below.

**Q1. Hold a qualification at Level 7 or higher on the QQI framework in:**

* A human science discipline (medical, psychological, social, educational)

**or**

* A qualification at Level 7 or higher in a health and social care profession

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date of Award DD/MM/YY | College / Educational Institution | Name of Course | Award |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

* Applicants with a degree / post-graduate qualification in Counselling or Psychotherapy, complete Section 2. A

*Please refer to “Appendix 7” in the “Additional Campaign Information” document for an illustration of IACP Accredited Courses as per the IACP Website and ICP Member Organisations as per the ICP Website. It is an illustration of typical qualifications, and does not automatically confer eligibility; it is not an exhaustive list but rather for general guidance purposes*.

* Applicants with a Clinical or Counselling Psychology qualification complete Section 2.B

|  |
| --- |
| **Q2. Hold a degree or post-graduate qualification in Counselling or Psychotherapy, recognition and membership** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section 2.A.1** | | | | | | |
| Date of Award DD/MM/YY | College / Educational Institution | Name of Course | | Award | | |
|  |  |  | |  | | |
|  |  |  | |  | | |
| * Accredited Members of the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) or the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), please complete Section 2.A.2 * Accredited Members of the Irish Council for Psychotherapy (ICP), please complete Section 2.A.3 | | | | | | |
| **Section 2.A.2 - Applicant Recognition and Accredited Membership of Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) / British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)** | | | | | | |
| * My qualification is recognised by the IACP / BACP * My overseas qualification is recognised by the IACP / BACP * I have full accredited membership of the IACP / BACP | | | | | |  |
|  |
|  |
| Date full accreditation gained of the IACP (DD/MM/YY): | | | | |  | |
| IACP Membership Number | | | | |  | |
| BACP Membership Number | | | | |  | |
| **Section 2.A.3 - Applicant Recognition and Accredited Membership of Irish Council for Psychotherapy (ICP)** | | | | | | |
| * My qualification is recognised by the Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy Ireland section of the ICP * My overseas qualification is recognised by the Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy Ireland section of the ICP * I have full accredited membership of the Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy Ireland section of the ICP | | | | | |  |
|  |
|  |
| * My qualification is recognised by the Constructive Therapy section of the ICP * My overseas qualification is recognised by the Constructive Therapy section of the ICP * I have full accredited membership of the Constructive Therapy section of the ICP | | | | | |  |
|  |
|  |
| * My qualification is recognised by the Couple and Family Therapy section of the ICP * My overseas qualification is recognised by the Couple and Family Therapy section of the ICP * I have full accredited membership of the Couple and Family Therapy section of the ICP | | | | | |  |
|  |
|  |
| * My qualification is recognised by the Humanistic & Integrative Psychotherapy section of the ICP * My overseas qualification is recognised by the Humanistic & Integrative Psychotherapy section of the ICP * I have full accredited membership of the Humanistic & Integrative Psychotherapy section of the ICP | | | | | |  |
|  |
|  |
| * My qualification is recognised by the Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy section of the ICP * My overseas qualification is recognised by the Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy section of the ICP * I have full accredited membership of the Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy section of the ICP | | | | | |  |
|  |
|  |
| Date full accreditation gained of the ICP (DD/MM/YY): | | | |  | | |
| **Section 2.A.4** | | | | | | |
| **Fully accredited members of the IACP or one of the five sections within the ICP are required to demonstrate that their pre-accreditation hours include a minimum of 100 hours of one to one counselling / psychotherapy with adult clients under the supervision to an IACP / ICP accredited supervisor.**  In the section below, please demonstrate how your experience meets this criterion. | | | | | | |
| Name of Employer | | |  | | | |
| Name of IACP / ICP Accredited Supervisor | | |  | | | |
| Dates of Employment | | |  | | | |
| Total Number of Hours | | |  | | | |
| In the box below, please provide a brief description of typical presentations with your adult client caseload | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| Name of Employer | | |  | | | |
| Name of IACP / ICP Accredited Supervisor | | |  | | | |
| Dates of Employment | | |  | | | |
| Total Number of Hours | | |  | | | |
| In the box below, please provide a brief description of typical presentations with your adult client caseload | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| Name of Employer | | |  | | | |
| Name of IACP / ICP Accredited Supervisor | | |  | | | |
| Dates of Employment | | |  | | | |
| Total Number of Hours | | |  | | | |
| In the box below, please provide a brief description of typical presentations with your adult client caseload | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |

**OR**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 2.B** | |
| **Please tick the statement which applies to you** | |
| I am a full member of the Clinical or Counselling Psychology Division ofthe Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI). | |
| **Yes:** | **No:** |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Please provide details of your accredited post graduate professional qualification in Clinical or Counselling Psychology or your Research Doctoral Degree in Psychology.** | | | |
| Date of Award DD/MM/YY | College / Educational Institution | Name of Course | Award |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS**

**Please list your second level and any (additional) third level educational achievements.**

**Please refer to the QQI website,** [**https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/the-qualifications-system/national-framework-of-qualifications**](https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/the-qualifications-system/national-framework-of-qualifications)**, to determine what level your qualification(s) is at on the National Framework of Qualifications**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dates**  **From/To** | **Educational Institution** | **Conferring**  **Body** | **Course of Study** | **Qualification Level on the NFQ**  *(Please insert n/a if not applicable to your Course of Study)* | **Qualification Achieved** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
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### CAREER OVERVIEW

Please ensure your full career history is clearly outlined below (e.g. if you took a career break, spent time out of work, please include this information so there are **no gaps in your career history** from when you left full-time education to present date).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **From** | **To** | **Title** | **Employer** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
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### Competency Questions

A guide to completing supplementary questions is available in Appendix 1 of this application form. It is strongly recommended that you read the guide before completing this section of your application form. In the spaces below, briefly describe what you consider to be a good example of demonstrating your ability in each of the skill areas 1-3. A summary definition of each of skill areas is provided for your information. This is a summary of what we mean by each skill heading.

Once you have completed Question Areas 1-2, you should progress to Question Area 3 - Knowledge / Experience Relevant to the Role Question. Please note that all 3 areas must be completed at the time of application.

Remember anything you say may be used as part of a shortlisting/ranking exercise and may be discussed in more depth at interview, should you be called to one.

|  |
| --- |
| **1. Analysis, Problem Solving & Decision Making Skills**  It is important for the Counsellor/Therapist to be able to gather and analyse information from a variety of sources and evaluate this information in problem solving / making well-founded decisions. They establish integrity by ensuring that the professional, ethical and safety factors are fully considered in decisions into which they have input and thinks ahead to the consequences of decisions.  ***In the space below please give an example of a situation where you best demonstrated your ability in this area. Please limit your answer in this section to 1 page.*** |
|  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **2. Building & Maintaining Relationships (including Team Skills & Leadership potential)**  The effective Counsellor/Therapist will demonstrate good interpersonal skills and the ability to build and maintain relationships. They demonstrate the ability to work well as part of a wider team, being approachable, helpful and supportive. They use diplomacy and tact in fraught situations and can diffuse tense situations comfortably.  ***In the space below, please give an example of a situation where you demonstrated your ability in this area. Please limit your answer in this section to 1 page.*** | |
|  | |
| **3. Knowledge / Experience Relevant to the Role**  In this area we ask you to focus on your experience to date that is relevant to the role.  Please provide below specific details from your professional experience to date that you feel helps you meet the requirements for this post as detailed in the Job Specification.  **It is important that your answer to this question does not exceed 1 page.  The selection board will take your adherence to this limit into account when reviewing your application.**  You may wish to write paragraphs or bullet points that demonstrate how your unique experience is relevant to the requirements of this role.  Candidates must answer this question in the space provided below. Failure to complete this section may result in your application being deemed ineligible. Remember anything you say may be discussed in more depth at interview.  Please include dates, the name of your employer & department where you worked. | |
| **From-To**  **DD/MM/YY** | **Employer(s) & Department Name** |
|  |  |
| **Please outline your depth and breadth of experience as relevant to the role. Please limit your answer in this section to 1 page.** | |

### Data Privacy Statement

The National Recruitment Service is committed to protecting your privacy and takes the security of your information very seriously. The National Recruitment Service (NRS) aims to be clear and transparent about the information we collect about you and how we use that information.

* Information on the HSE NRS Candidate Data Privacy , is available at : [HSE NRS Candidate Privacy Statement](https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/jobs/recruitment-process/candidate-privacy-notices-for-candidates-in-recruitment-process.html)
* Information on the General Data Protection Regulation is available at [HSE General Data Protection Regulation](https://www.hse.ie/eng/gdpr)
* Information on HSE record retention periods is available at <https://assets.hse.ie/media/documents/Record_Retention_Periods_Policy.pdf>

I acknowledge that by submitting this application The HSE will communicate with me by various means (such as phone , email , SMS, post mail ) regarding my application during the recruitment process and for the lifecycle of any panel (should I be successful in obtaining a place on the panel).

I understand that if at any point I wish to stop receiving communications( in any format) from the HSE regarding this application and any future generated panel as a result of this campaign that I may contact the HSE (through the nominated contact on the Additional Campaign Information) and explicitly request to be removed from future communications. In doing so I understand that I will no longer receive any communications or Expression of interests for roles from the panel generated from this campaign.

**Protected Disclosure**

Pursuant to the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, as amended, a person that acquires information on a relevant wrongdoing during a recruitment process is a ‘worker’ and can make a protected disclosure about the wrongdoing. For more information about making a protected disclosure to the HSE, please visit <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/protected-disclosures/> or email [protected.disclosures@hse.ie](mailto:protected.disclosures@hse.ie)

**General Declaration**

It is important that you read this Declaration carefully.

**Part 1:** Obligations Placed on Candidates who participate in The Recruitment Process.

The Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 and Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Amendment Act 2013 makes very specific provisions in relation to the responsibilities placed on candidates who participate in recruitment campaigns and these are detailed in Section 4 of the Code of Practice issued under the Act.

These obligations are as follows:

Any canvassing by or on behalf of candidates shall result in disqualification and exclusion from the recruitment process. Candidates shall not:

* knowingly or recklessly make a false or a misleading application
* knowingly or recklessly provide false information or documentation
* canvass any person with or without inducements
* impersonate a candidate at any stage of the process
* knowingly or maliciously obstruct or interfere with the recruitment process
* knowingly and without lawful authority take any action that could result in the compromising of any test material or of any evaluation of it
* interfere with or compromise the process in any way

Any person who contravenes the above provisions, or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions, shall be guilty of an offence.

It is the policy of the HSE to report any such above contraventions to An Garda Siochana.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment / selection process, then, in accordance with the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 and Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Amendment Act 2013.

* where he / she has not been appointed to a post, he / shall be disqualified as a candidate; and
* where he / she has been appointed as a result of that process, he / she shall forfeit that appointment

**Part 2**

**Declaration:** “I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief there is nothing in relation to my conduct, character or personal background of any nature that would adversely affect the position of trust in which I would be placed by virtue of my appointment to this position. I hereby confirm my irrevocable consent to the Health Service Executive to the making of such enquiries, as the Health Service Executive deems necessary in respect of my suitability for the post in respect of which this application is made.

I hereby accept and confirm the entitlement of the Health Service Executive to reject my application or terminate my employment (in the event of a contract of employment having been entered into) if I have omitted to furnish the Health Service Executive with any information relevant to my application or to my continued employment with the Health Service Executive or where I have made any false statement or misrepresentation relevant to this application or my continuing employment with the Health Service Executive.

Furthermore, I hereby declare that all the particulars furnished in connection with this application are true, and that I am aware of the qualifications and particulars for this position. I understand that I may be required to submit documentary evidence in support of any particulars given by me on my Application Form. I understand that any false or misleading information submitted by me will render me liable to automatic disqualification or render me liable to dismissal, if employed.”

**Signed:**

*(Name of Applicant)*

**Date:**

NB: If you are submitting your application form via email we will accept the application form unsigned but you will be required to sign the Declaration at interview should you be invited to one. Failure to sign this declaration at interview will render it invalid.

### REFERENCES

Please give two referees (including your current employer). Please ensure that the referees you provide are from a clinical perspective. We retain the right to contact all previous employers.

Do you wish us to contact you prior to contacting your referees? Yes  / No

**1. Name and Job Title of Referee:**

**Dates From-To (MM/YY- MM/YY):**

**Professional Relationship to Candidate:**

**Postal Address:**

**Telephone Contact Details:** Mobile: Landline:

**Email Address:**

**2. Name and Job Title of Referee:**

**Dates From-To (MM/YY- MM/YY):**

**Professional Relationship to Candidate:**

**Postal Address:**

**Telephone Contact Details:** Mobile: Landline:

**Email Address:**

### APPLICANT CHECKLIST

If all required details / documentation (as below) are not submitted with your application we will be unable to process your application to the next stage of the process i.e. short listing / interview.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Mobile Telephone Number  Email Address  Postal Address |  | **Mandatory** |
| That you have indicated your Health Region choice(s) on Page 4 |  |
| That the information you have provided in the Qualification/ Eligibility Criteria section clearly shows how your qualifications/ experience match the requirements. Dates should be clearly indicated i.e. DD/MM/YY, qualification titles etc. |  |
| Competency Question 1 – 3  Each question must be fully completed to ensure that your application is deemed eligible to progress to the next stage (e.g. interview) |  |
| Work Permit Documentation (if relevant to non-EEA applicants). Please refer to Appendix 2 of the Additional Campaign information document for details of documentation required. |  |
| Application is submitted by the closing date and time and that you have used the campaign reference in the subject line of your email. |  |
| That you have downloaded and saved the Job Specification and Additional Campaign Information for future reference. | | |

**APPENDIX 1 – GUIDE TO COMPLETING COMPETENCY QUESTIONS**

In the Competency Questions section, you are required to describe some of your personal achievements to date that demonstrate certain necessary skills and qualities required for the position. All question areas must be completed. The instructions below will help you to complete your answers and will also be of valuable help for you when preparing for interview.

For each question area, you are given a description of a skill or quality. You are then asked to describe a situation, from your own experience, which you think is the best example of where **you** have demonstrated your ability in this area. It is essential that you describe how **you** demonstrated the skill or quality in question.

The information you present here may be used to help structure your interview, should you be invited to one. It may also form part of a ranking exercise process. This means that a ranking board will ‘rank’ applicants based on information put forward in your Application Form. Interviews may be held on a phased basis, inviting applicants to interview based on the position held in the ranking exercise. A primary panel will be formed of candidates successful in the first phase of interviews. If subsequent interviews are held candidates successful at these interviews will be added to the end of the primary panel and will be listed with a lower order of merit.

Therefore, it is important to compose your replies carefully in this section and to structure your answer so that you give specific information about what **you** have done.

For each example please include the following:

**(a)** **The nature of the task, problem or objective;**

**(b) What you actually did and how you demonstrated the skill or quality (and, where appropriate, the date you demonstrated it);**

**(c) The outcome or result of the situation and your estimate of the proportion of credit you can claim for the outcome.**

Competency questions are designed to help you to present **relevant evidence** in order that decision makers can evaluate how well you ‘fit’ the requirements of a particular role. Relevant evidence is usually drawn from your work experience and the way in which you have accomplished a range of activities. Those involved in screening the applications will be evaluating the information you give against **specific skills** required for effective performance in the role. To do this they need you to give enough detail so that they can tell **what you actually did** and **how you did it.**

The people doing the screening **will not** assume that you demonstrate a skill at the right level just because of your current role, length of experience or educational qualifications. These do not give enough evidence about how you accomplished relevant tasks.

So, if a question is about your approach to decision making, you need to do more than describe your current role and list important decisions you have made. You will need to describe **how** you reached relevant decisions.

**Some guidelines for presenting yourself well:**

* **Give specific examples**: most questions will ask you to describe an example of when you have demonstrated a skill: try to do this concisely but with enough detail so that the reader will be clear about **what you actually did**.This detail might include information about timescales, the number of people involved, budgets etc. It can help to use bullet points to that the sequence of events is clear to the reader.
* **Give a range of examples**: if possible, base your answers on different situations or challenges you faced rather than rely on just one experience. This helps the reader to evaluate how you tackle different challenges and not just your behaviour in a ‘one off’ situation.
* **Be concrete rather than theoretical:** a clear description of **how you actually behaved** in a particular situation (and why) is of much more use to the reader than a vague or general description of what you consider to be desirable attributes.

# *Example*

**Communication Skills:** *The effective x must be able to adapt communication style to particular situations and audiences….. able to produce clear and concise written information….*

***Example 1:***

*I was responsible for producing important management reports and supporting presentations for a range of important and high profile clients. Through my understanding of the clients’ needs and my effective communication skills, I have ensured that the reports that go to the clients are relevant and focused, and are continually improved. The reports I have produced and the presentations I have made were well received by all my clients. As a result of the combination of my analytical thinking and interpersonal and communication skills, my brief has been extended to lead the development of the strategic plan for the organisation.*

This is **not** a good example because:

* It does not give sufficient details of exactly what the person did or how they actually demonstrated their *‘ effective communications skills’;*
* It is not clear where the information requested at (a), (b) and (c) is presented.

***Example 2:***

*(a) The unit I was attached to was responsible for producing a management report and supporting oral presentation for several large clients, some with significant problems and issues to report. In some cases the management report was publicly available and was subject to a great deal of scrutiny. A new style/format of management letter needed to be developed for my clients, as many of the clients were complaining that the letters were too large/long and difficult to read.*

*(b) I was tasked with developing a new style of management letter for the clients. I had to meet stringent quality requirements/criteria whilst addressing the need to reduce its size. Following consultation, mainly over the phone and face-to-face, with the majority of our clients, I realised that a summarised report format with a better visual and more interactive presentation was the answer. I developed a format for a summarised report, reducing the average length from 40 pages to just 10. I achieved this through careful editing of information and increased use of graphs etc. I then developed a more focused presentation to clients and included more graphical displays and incorporated short presentations by colleagues directly involved in producing the work. During the presentations I encouraged clients to ask questions and develop their understanding of the issues at hand.*

*(c )The summarised management report and improved presentations were seen as a success by the clients, who with exception, in responding to an evaluation survey, found the new format/style better than the previous, and all requested that the revised system should be continued. 80% credit*

This is a **better** example because:

* It describes exactly what the person did and how they communicated, i.e. *‘…..consultation, mainly over the phone and face-to face’; ‘developed a format for a summarised report, reducing the average length from 40 pages to just 10’; ‘achieved this through careful editing of the information and increased use of graphs’ and ‘encouraged clients to ask questions’.*
* It is clearer where the information requested at (a), (b) and (c) of the competency question section is presented.

***Notes***

* It is important that you **write clearly and concisely.** Your written communication skills will be assessed against what you write on your application form.
* It is highly recommended that you keep a copy of this section of the application form.
* Please do not use the same example to illustrate your answer for more than two skill areas.
* Should you be called to interview, the board may look for **additional examples** of where you demonstrated the skills required for this post. Therefore, you should think of a number of examples of where you demonstrated each of the skills.