The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

Human Resources
Goireasan Daonna

Applying for a Post with The Highland Council

Your Application, Recruitment Process & Employee Benefits

Contents
Clàr-innse

Applying to The Highland Council **2**

Stage 1 - Your Application 2

Stage 2 – Shortlisting 4

Stage 3 - Interview 5

Stage 4 – Pre-employment Checks 6

Stage 5 – Offer 6

Employee Benefits **7**

Inverness photo by Robin Canfield on Unsplash
Road laying photo by Gordon Douglas
School photo by IainFerguson
Office photo by ABrightSidePhotography
Path photo by Jack Skinner on Unsplash
School cook photo by THC
Smiling ladies photo by Kylie Haulk on Unsplash

The Highland Council wants to attract, recruit, develop and retain a skilled and flexible workforce. Following the steps outlined below should help you create a strong and impactful application.

The Highland Council understands that diversity fosters creativity and innovation. We are committed to equality of opportunity, and being fair and inclusive. We welcome applications from people from all backgrounds, representative of the communities we serve and particularly encourage applications from candidates who are likely to be under-represented in our workforce.

You can find all of our vacancies on www.myjobscotland.gov.uk

Applying to The Highland Council

Stage 1 - Your Application

Every post we advertise will include a job description, outlining the duties required of the role and a person specification describing the skills, knowledge and abilities required to carry out the job role.

Please read all the recruitment documentation before you apply. You will also need to gather your personal information (work experience, qualifications and referee's details) in order to complete the application form and evidence your suitability for the job.

When completing your application:

- focus on the "Statement in Support of your Application" section of your application. This is the place to showcase why you are the ideal candidate for the job
- refer to the person specification in the "Statement in Support of your Application" section and detail where you meet each of the points to allow the Hiring Manager to see relevant examples of the qualities they are looking for
- visit any websites or documents referred to in the vacancy advert prior to completing your application

- download and save the job description, person specification and any additional documents from the vacancy job advert as you will be unable to access these once the vacancy has closed
- you must submit your online application before midnight on the closing date.

Work History

List all part time, full time, relief and voluntary work in chronological order. Please detail the reason for any employment gaps.

You should provide details about each job role you have undertaken to ensure that the Hiring Manager will have a full understanding of your work experience.

References

You should make sure your referees are willing to provide a reference before adding their names to your application. Ensure the details you provide are accurate, including their work telephone number and email address.

One reference should be from your current or most recent employer. This should be a Line Manager who can comment on your performance, attendance and suitability for the post which you have applied for. This should not be a relative or a work colleague providing a reference on a personal basis.

A second reference can be provided by a previous employer, a colleague from your current job who can comment upon your suitability for the position, or a character reference from a responsible individual who can attest to your general qualities (excluding family members or partners).

If this is your first job, or if you have not been employed in the last year, you will need to provide two character references from responsible individuals who can vouch for your general qualities (excluding family members or partners). If you have recently left school or further education, we can accept a reference from a tutor, teacher, or educational professional. You may also provide a reference from someone at a voluntary workplace who can vouch for your character.

References are not sought if you are an existing permanent employee of the Highland Council applying for another job in the organisation.

Stage 2 – Shortlisting

The Hiring Manager will review submitted applications and a recruiting panel will complete the shortlisting process aligned to criteria within the job description and person specification. They will assess all the information contained within your application including any required qualifications.

The recruiting panel will thoroughly review the 'Statement in Support of your Application' section, so it's essential to provide enough information in this section to demonstrate your ability to perform the job.

The Highland Council is a Disability Confident Leader and guarantees an interview to any applicant who has indicated that they have a disability in their application form, and who meet the essential criteria of the post.

The Highland Council offers a guaranteed interview to all applicants who indicate they have been a member of the Armed Forces (Regular or Reservist), or are a spouse/partner or dependent of serving Armed Forces personnel, who meet the essential criteria for a vacancy.

If you are shortlisted, you will receive an Invite to Interview which is usually sent to the email address listed on your application form. This will contain information explaining how to book an available interview slot online and how to request any Reasonable Adjustments required to attend interview.

Please email Recruitment.Enquiries@highland.gov.uk if you cannot attend the interview.

If you are not shortlisted, you will receive notification via email that you have not been successful.

We respond to all applicants so ensure your junk mailbox is checked for emails. Status updates also appear in your My Job Scotland online account throughout the process.

Stage 3 - Interview

If you are invited to an interview, it is important that we make the process as smooth as possible for you.

Your Invite to Interview will be sent to the email address listed on your application. This will contain details including the vacancy title and location of the interview (or Microsoft Teams access information if the interview is to be held virtually). As part of the interview, you may be asked to provide a presentation to the interview panel on a specified topic.

Preparing for an interview:

- revisit your application, look at the job description and person specification to re-cap the main duties and responsibilities of the post and the attributes required to carry out the role
- research The Highland Council as an organisation. This could give key information on current agendas, hot topics and priorities that could be relevant for the job you are interested in. Information is available on our website www.highland.gov.uk
- mentally prepare some examples to showcase how you meet the job description and person specification
- think about the questions that you are likely to be asked at the interview
- if a presentation is required, prepare and practice
- the interview is also your chance to ask questions, you may want to ask about the vacancy, service or perhaps terms of employment. The panel will be happy to answer these.

You will be required to present **original documents** at the interview which will be copied by the Hiring Manager, namely:

- evidence of your right to work in the UK (you will receive guidance documents with further details about what satisfies this check)
- evidence of your qualifications and/or registrations (where required).

At the interview:

- there is likely to be a panel of 2 or more members asking the interview questions
- questions will be based on the job description and person specification, and you may be asked to describe or give examples that will evidence your ability to undertake the job role

- the Hiring Manager will outline the terms and conditions of the vacancy
- you will be given the opportunity to ask any questions you may have at the end of the interview.

You will be contacted by the Hiring Manager regarding the outcome of your interview.

Stage 4 – Pre-employment Checks

If you are successful at interview and conditionally offered the position, there are pre-employment checks which need to be completed before you can commence employment. These include the 'Right to Work Check' and a Medical Questionnaire. Your referees will also be contacted if you are not already employed by Highland Council.

If a PVG check is required for the post, a form will be emailed to you directly by the HR Transactions Team.

Stage 5 – Offer

Once the pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed (including your references) your start date will be confirmed.

A written Offer of Employment will be sent to the email address stated on your application.

Employee Benefits

The Highland Council is committed to their employees and offers an excellent benefit package that can include:

Work Life Balance & Family Friendly Staff Policies	We have various policies in place to support employees in their work life balance and family commitments, for example: • **Family Friendly Staff Policies** - including Carer Positive, Maternity, Shared Parental, Adoption and ordinary Parental Leave • **Flexible working patterns** - including both full time and part time opportunities, depending on the needs of the service. • **Hybrid Working** - depending on the needs of the service. Employees and managers are now accustomed to working in different ways (e.g. home office/hybrid working). • **Special Leave** – subject to the terms of the policy. • **Annual leave and public holidays** – 21 days annual leave plus 7 'floating' and 7 'fixed' public holidays and an additional 5 days annual leave after completion of 5 years continuous service (pro-rata for part-time employees), • **Pension Scheme** - Our occupational pensions schemes are very generous.
Pension Scheme	Our occupational pensions schemes are very generous. • Teachers join the Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA) and non-teaching staff join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) • Agenda for Change posts may align with either NHS Pension Scheme SPPA (if eligible) or Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)
Shared Cost AVC Scheme	For members of the Local Government Pension Scheme there is an opportunity to join the Shared Cost AVC Scheme. This allows you to supplement your pension benefits and make Tax and National Insurance savings on your contributions at the same time. Access to this benefit is subject to meeting statutory eligibility criteria.

Competitive Salary	Competitive salary with an incremental and annual pay review.
Learning Development Opportunities	Wide range of learning and development opportunities with an annual review to discuss career opportunities and progression.
Removal & Relocation Package	A removal and relocation package of up to £6,500 may be available.
Employee Assistance Programme	**Employee Assistance Programme** (EAP) is available 24/7, 365 days a year and offers 'in the moment' support to employees.
Cycle to Work Scheme	The **Cycle to Work Scheme** is a salary sacrifice scheme where you can purchase a bike and accessories, spreading the cost through manageable salary reductions over a pre-determined period. Access to this benefit is subject to meeting eligibility criteria.
Car Scheme	Our **Car Scheme** (through Vivup) gives you the chance to lease a new car, spreading the cost through manageable salary reductions which provides you with significant income tax and NI savings.
Annual Leave Purchase	The **Annual Leave Purchase Scheme** enables you to purchase additional holidays each year and spread the cost through manageable salary reductions. Access to this benefit is subject to meeting eligibility criteria, Service approval and a specific window for ordering applies.
Employee Discount/ Reward Scheme	**Employee Benefits** - A range of lifestyle savings and discounts to help you save money across hundreds of the UK's favourite high-street and online retailers.
High Life Highland Discount	**High Life Highland** Corporate Discount of 10% on an Individual or Family Membership. Available in over 25 leisure centres throughout the Highlands