Addressing Selection Criteria

Working with selection criteria

Selection criteria are the key competencies required for a position; they include the skills, knowledge, experience, values and personal attributes required.

Some common examples of selection criteria include:

- Well-developed communication skills
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Ability to work under pressure
- Ability to prioritise tasks
- Administrative and financial experience

When selection criteria are provided

Commonwealth and state government departments throughout Australia have a system whereby all the details of a position are available for applicants to help them prepare their application. This includes a position description and the skills and knowledge required (often referred to as the Selection Criteria or Knowledge and Skills Required). Non-government and many industry employers also produce formal selection criteria for applicants to address.

There are two types of criterion: essential and desirable. As an applicant you must address each criterion.

When selection criteria are not provided

If the organisation does not have any formal selection criteria for you to address, you must still tailor your application to their needs. You can do this by using some of the key words in the advertisement and attaching a supporting statement which is prepared in the same way as formal selection criteria.

When minimal information is provided

In very rare circumstances you will be provided with little or no information about the knowledge and skills that are required. In this case all you can do is prepare a very strong covering letter setting out your particular claims to the position.

Basic guidelines for addressing selection criteria

The basic guidelines for addressing selection criteria are as follows:

Collect the information

Ensure you gather all necessary material from the employer:

- Get the position description;
- Find out the knowledge and skills required;
- Ask further questions to clarify issues by contacting personnel (indicated in the advertisement or position description); and
- Don’t assume any details without checking.
Identify each criterion

Write down each criterion and break it up into distinct, workable parts. For example, if one of the criterion statements reads “must have strong written and oral communication skills, the ability to work well in a team as well as high level negotiation and liaison skills”, you need to divide the statement up as follows:

- strong written and oral communication skills;
- the ability to work well in a team;
- high level negotiation skills; and
- high level liaison skills.

Brainstorm your examples

You must address each part of all of the criteria listed, giving fairly equal attention to each. For each part, brainstorm as many examples as possible of your background in this area. Don’t be too selective at this stage about what to include.

Revise and refine

When you have completed the brainstorm for each criterion, go back and select the examples that you think best address each one. You’ll find you’ll do a bit of ‘cutting and pasting’ before you end up with the most appropriate and powerful examples under each heading.

Make sure that you use a variety of experiences throughout your statement. Be careful not to use your involvement in a particular activity (no matter how significant) as the only evidence for every criterion.

Writing up the selection criteria

When addressing selection criteria, it is useful to apply the STAR model. Placing examples of how you have demonstrated your skills into the STAR model is critical for developing an effective statement.

The STAR acronym stands for:

- S ituation (briefly describe the context)
- T ask (what were your responsibilities or initiatives?)
- A ction (what did you do?)
- R esult (what were the outcomes?)

For each criterion:

- write the name of each criterion exactly as it is worded in the application package;
- start with a positive claim;
- give a specific example;
- describe how you acted; and
- describe the result.

For example:

**Excellent verbal communication skills**

“I have highly-developed verbal communication skills, which have been enhanced through a number of experiences. [POSITIVE CLAIM]

In my role as Vice-President of the Seacliff Tennis Club during 2005 [SITUATION], I was asked to speak to the local Rotary club in support of an application for sponsorship [TASK].

I gave a 20-minute presentation outlining the Club’s aims, and responded to questions from Rotary members [ACTION].

The tennis club’s application was successful and we received a $5000 sponsorship from Rotary [RESULT]”.

Other tips to keep in mind when addressing selection criteria

- Dot point form and/or concise sentences make your application easier to read.
- Use examples to back up every statement you make (use examples that can be visualised).
- Don't just feed their words back to them - make every sentence count by focusing on what you have to offer.
- For a listing of words you can use in your statements, see the list of buzz words at the end of this fact sheet.
- Each criterion should be approximately half a page.
- When each criterion is given a weighting of importance you should dedicate a proportionate amount of detail to each part.
- When a statement asks for qualifications or some other information that is finite, the length can be shorter.
Editing checklist

Before submitting your application you should check your selection criteria against the following checklist:

- responses sound professional and active
- information is logical and consistent
- checked for grammatical errors
- verb tenses are accurate and consistent
- sentences are concise
- avoid abbreviations or unexplained acronyms
- avoid weakening qualifiers
- put most important information first

A final note

Once you have addressed the selection criteria you will be well prepared for the next stage of the job search process - the interview. This is because selection criteria usually form the basis of interview questions.

At interviews candidates are usually asked questions that are directly related to the selection criteria. This allows you to prepare responses that are an extension of what you have written in your Statement Addressing Selection Criteria.

Contact us

Student Leadership and Careers offer support across all UTAS campuses both online and face to face. You can access assistance with job applications and careers advice through online modules, face to face workshops and appointments all which can be found in CareerHub.

Visit [https://careerhub.utas.edu.au](https://careerhub.utas.edu.au) for more information.

You can contact us by email or phone.

Email: [Careers.Service@utas.edu.au](mailto:Careers.Service@utas.edu.au)

Phone: 6226 2511

Web: [www.utas.edu.au/students/careers](http://www.utas.edu.au/students/careers)
[www.facebook.com./UtasCareers](http://www.facebook.com./UtasCareers)

Buzz words for job applications

The following vocabulary is a useful reference list of ‘active’ language:

- accelerated
- accomplished
- accounted for
- achieved
- acquired
- acted
- adapted
- addressed
- administered
- adopted
- advanced
- advised
- aided
- allocated
- allowed
- analysed
- applied
- appointed
- appraised
- approved
- arranged
- assembled
- assessed
- assigned
- assisted
- assured
- attained
- attuned to
- audited
- authored
- automated
- avoided
- awarded
- balanced
- began
- believed
- broadened
- brought
- in/about
- budgeted
- calculated
- catalogued
- characterised
- clarified
- collaborated
- competent with
- compiled
- concentrated
- conceptualised
- conducted
- configured
- consolidated
- constructed
- consulted
- contacted
- contained
- contemplated
- continued
- contracted
- contributed
- coordinated
- critiqued
- curtailed
- delegated
- demonstrated
- designed
- despatched
- determined
- developed
- devised
- diagnosed
- differentiated
- directed
- disseminated
- distinguished
- diversified
- diverted
- documented
Buzz words for job applications

**E**
edited
eliminated
employed
empowered
enabled
enacted
encouraged
engaged
engineered
enhanced
enlisted
enrolled
ensured
equated
established
evaluated
examined
executed
exhibited
experienced
experimented
extracted

**F**
facilitated
familiarised
fashioned
financed
fine-tuned
focused
forecast
formulated
founded

**G**
gained
generated
grouped
guided

**H**
handled
harmonised
headed
held
hosted

**I**
identified
illustrated
implemented
indexed
influenced
initiated
instigated
integrated
interpreted
introduced
investigated
issued

**J**
joined
judged

**K**
kept

**L**
lunched
lectured
led
liaised
lowered

**M**
made
maintained
managed
manipulated
manufactured
mapped
marketed
master-minded
measured
mediated
mentored
modelled
moderated
modified
monitored
motivated

**N**
named
navigated
negotiated
networked
nominated
noted

**O**
obtained
opened
operated
organised
originated
overcame
overhauled
oversaw

**P**
packaged
participated
perfected
performed
permitted
persuaded
pioneered
planned
presided over
processed
produced
programmed
projected
promoted
proposed
provided
publicised
published
purchased

**Q**
qualified
quantified

**R**
ratified
recognised
recommended
reconciled
recruited
rectified
referred
reformed
regulated
rehabilitated
reorganised
represented
researched
restructured
retrieved
reversed
revised

**S**
scheduled
screened
selected
served as
settled
simplified
solved
specified
streamlined
strengthened
structured
succeeded
suggested
summarised
supervised
surpassed
surveyed
systemised

**T**
tabulated
taken part
theorised
trained
transcribed
translated
trimmed
turned around

**U**
undertook
unified
upgraded
used
utilised

**V**
validated
verified
versed
viable
voted

**W**
widened
won
wrote