



Advice on completing your application form

Please read these notes carefully before completing your application form.

Introduction

As part of Christian Aid's commitment to equality of opportunity for all, internal and external applicants for every role in Christian Aid are treated in exactly the same way. The generic application form is the sole mechanism we have for making our first selection and decide whom we wish to invite for a selection process. That means that we only consider the information that appears on the form. No assumptions will be made about your abilities, skills, experience, knowledge or qualifications so it is very important that your application form gives us the information we need and the information that you want to give us to demonstrate your suitability for the role. This guidance is designed to help you fill in your application form effectively.

The Role Profile

In some organisations the details of a job are explained through a job description which describes the duties and responsibilities of the job and a person specification which gives details of the skills, abilities and experience required to do the job. In Christian Aid this information is provided in a Role Profile which has two key parts. These are the dimensions of the role (inc. knowledge and skills dimensions - which are presented on one side of the sheet) and the competencies required for the role (which are found on the other side).

The dimensions of the role

This section of the role profile outlines the key purpose of the role and the key outputs the role is expected to deliver. In addition there are sections in the profile that highlight the context of the role and where it fits in to the organisation as a whole, the relationships and level of authority the role holds, the key knowledge and skill requirements for the role and the other qualifications that are needed.

The competencies for the role

Christian Aid has a competency framework which describes the behaviours that Christian Aid staff must demonstrate in their work. This competency framework includes core competencies which every member of staff must demonstrate and a number of role specific competencies which must be demonstrated by members of staff doing particular jobs. The second section of the role profile therefore outlines the core competencies for the role and then goes on to outline the role specific competencies for the role.

How does this work in practice? The core competencies are a number of behaviour descriptions that Christian Aid has identified as being common to all roles across the organisation. The role-specific competencies are a number of behaviour descriptions that are added to the profile to boost where the core competencies are lacking. For example, line managers will have an extra two role-specific competencies around managing and leading people and teams. Every role-profile can have up to six role-specific competencies. Each competency is described in five levels of complexity and the chosen competencies for a role will have a level assigned to indicate the level of competency required for the role. We advise applicants to familiarise themselves with the full framework as they write their application form.

General points to bear in mind

- We would advise you to complete the application form electronically. If this is not possible complete all sections neatly in black ink, bearing in mind that your form may need to be photocopied.
- Please make sure that you return your completed form to Christian Aid by the specified time on the closing date. We do not consider late applications.
- Before you begin to draft your application form, please read the original job advertisement again, study the role profile carefully and consult the Christian Aid competency framework.
- We also suggest that you pay careful attention to the up to four competency-based questions you are asked to answer in your application form and think carefully about what you are going to write about before beginning to complete the form.
- Please remember that there are a number of different sections on the form. Each of them must be completed or your application will either not be considered or offer less hope of success..

The Christian Aid application form

As indicated above, the form has a number of different sections and they are each included with a particular purpose in mind. The following explains what Christian Aid is looking for.

Personal details: Please ensure that you complete all the personal details required in the form including providing information about whether you have a work permit if this relevant to your application.

References: Please provide us with full details of two referees, one of whom should be your most recent employer.

Present or last post: Please provide an outline of your responsibilities in your present or last job and then provide details of any previous employment and/or relevant work over the last ten years which you think may indicate your suitability for the role.

Languages: Please provide details of your first language and any other language you either write or speak.

Relevant education & qualifications: Please use this section to highlight any education or qualifications you hold that you think are particularly relevant to the role you are applying for.

Demonstrating the key competencies: Throughout the form we are seeking as much evidence as possible to assess a candidate's suitability for the role. In the spaces provided in this section of the form give examples of how you meet the knowledge, skills and competencies required by the role. The form asks you to respond to up to four competency-based questions from the advert, using the guidelines below:

- **Situation** – describe the situation in the example you have chosen. In this way you are providing a context for the next part – the task
- **Task** – describe the task you had to do
- **Actions** – describe the actions that you took to resolve the situation
- **Result** – describe the outcomes of your actions, including what worked well, what you might do differently next time and what you learnt as a result.

In the spaces provided on the application form you will need to explain in your own words, how, when and where you have put these competencies into practice. *You must describe the actions that you took.* Please bear in mind that you must show evidence that you have experience and capability of applying the specific competencies at the level described for the post for which you are applying. It is not enough to show that you have relevant qualifications.

In answering the up to four competency-based questions, our advice is that you do the following:

- Describe a carefully selected example from your previous experience, which gives you plenty of opportunity to express the required activities making up the competency.
- Use situations that help you demonstrate your capability at the level of competency described in the role profile.
- Set the scene and context for your action.
- Be succinct and to the point. Preferably using prose rather than just bullet point headings.
- Use your own words.
- Be well written, clear, grammatical and properly spelt.
- Describe what you did, thought and felt and why.

- Describe the impact of your actions on others and on the situation.
- Make clear what your responsibilities and objectives were and the resources you used that were relevant to the situation.
- Show that you know why your actions were effective and/or how you could have improved on what you did.
- Describe the outcome(s) or impact of your actions.
- If you describe a scenario where the result was not the intended outcome explain why, what you would do differently and what you learnt from the situation.

Additional information

We recognise that you may have other examples you wish to include to demonstrate your suitability for the role in addition to those you have used in answering the questions. If that is the case, please use this section to provide any additional evidence that you feel is relevant to what is included in the job advertisement and role profile.

Your signature

By signing your application form you are indicating that the statements you make are true and complete. Making a false statement on your application may affect your future employment with Christian Aid. If you submit your application form in an electronic format, no signature is required. If you are called for interview you will be asked to sign the form when we meet you. If you submit your application in hard copy form you should sign and date your form.

A final word

Please read the above carefully and follow the advice we offer. In this way you will be certain to provide both the information that Christian Aid requires and the information you want Christian Aid to have so that we may an informed judgement about your application.

Diversity monitoring form – guidance notes (This section is relevant to UK/Irish vacancies **only**)

Why monitor?

The most reliable and efficient way of monitoring the effectiveness of our diversity and inclusion policy is to carry out regular analyses of the workforce and job applicants.

Without diversity monitoring, an organisation will never know whether its policy is working. There is a risk that people will just see the policy as paying lip service to diversity and equality. If this happens, the policy could lose credibility and commitment among the staff who have to deliver it, as well as the people who are affected by it. To have a diversity and

inclusion policy without diversity monitoring is like aiming for good financial management without keeping financial records.

Without monitoring, it would be difficult to establish the nature or extent of any inequality, the areas where action is most needed, and whether measures aimed at reducing inequality are succeeding. Without diversity records it is virtually impossible to know whether or not people are being discriminated against.

Confidentiality

Data provided will be entered onto the new HR database and maintained confidentially for the purposes of monitoring and statistical analysis.

Diversity monitoring

Diversity monitoring is the process used to collect, store, and analyse data about people's backgrounds.

We can use diversity monitoring to:

- highlight possible inequalities;
- investigate their underlying causes; and
- remove any unfairness or disadvantage.

In employment, monitoring lets us examine the profile of our workforce and compare this with benchmark data.

It also lets us analyse how our employment practices and procedures may affect different groups.

Diversity monitoring can tell us whether we are offering equality of opportunity and treatment to all groups. We can then concentrate on finding solutions and making appropriate changes, rather than using guesswork or assumptions.

In employment, diversity monitoring can identify barriers that may be preventing us from making use of available talent. It can also help us to avoid potential complaints of discrimination, by making sure that we pick up and tackle any issues at an early stage. The cost of discrimination claims can include money and management time, as well as emotional distress for those involved and potentially wider damage to staff morale.

Finally, diversity monitoring can help to improve our reputation as an employer of choice.

Guidance on completing the form

What is the post you are applying for:

This should be the job title as advertised/detailed in the job description/role profile.

Where did you first see/hear about this vacancy?

Many people are directed to the Christian Aid website via another source. Please indicate where you first saw the role advertised; only putting Christian Aid website if this was where you first saw it.

Ethnic origin

Ethnic origin is not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. It is about colour and broad ethnic/cultural groups.

What is your nationality?

Nationality relates to the country in which you were born or of which you are a citizen (perhaps by naturalisation or marriage).

How would you describe your sexuality?

There is an option to not disclose this information if you would prefer not to say.

How would you describe your religion or belief?

There is an option to not disclose this information if you would prefer not to say. If your religion is not listed on the drop down list, please select other and define in the space below. Similarly, if your religion is stated as Christian, please state the denomination.

Disability

Disability is about more than being in a wheelchair! There are many people who are covered by the Disability Discrimination Act. Again, there is an option not to disclose the information if you would prefer not to say, however, it is generally in an employee's interests to disclose such information.

Sensitive Personal Data Consent Form

The information contained in the monitoring form will only be used to assess the effectiveness of the Christian Aid Diversity and Inclusion Policy and to reduce the possibility of discrimination occurring. The information will be stored on a confidential HR database. Please sign the form to give your consent to the data being used for monitoring purposes.