

Recruitment Support & Guidance Pack

**HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND**

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1. Job Descriptions

A job description typically outlines the necessary skills, training and education needed by a potential employee. It will set out the expectations of the employer for any potential new member of staff. Thoroughly reading this will help you gain an understanding of that role.

Basic information

This is usually found at the top of the job description and should cover:

- Job title
- Contract type (Permanent, fixed term, number of hours per week)
- Salary range/starting salary
- Contact name/details
- Closing date

About the role and the team

This covers information that could give you a good idea about what working in that post will actually be like on a day-to-day basis. Details may include:

- Job purpose
- Number of members in the team.
- Whether travel, shift work, overtime etc. is required

Duties

This is a good place to check off with your transferable skills and personal qualities and determine whether you would be able to undertake the role.

This section will cover the key or most important duties of the role. It may break down:

- Specific responsibilities
- Processes and tools you need to use
- Key shareholders you would be dealing with
- Skills, behaviours and activities that you would be expected to demonstrate

Person specification/criteria

This is where an employer will list the specifics that they require for the postholder. This could be:

- Skills/Experience
- Knowledge
- Qualifications

<u>Essential criteria</u>	Absolutely necessary/ non-negotiable	<u>Desirable</u>	Not mandatory but would boost your application.
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Hints & Tips:

- Please read the job description before completing the statement of competency as it provides all the information of the post being advertised as well as information about the competencies that are essential or desirable to the post.
- Pay attention to the words that are used in their job description. Try to mirror or use similar language in your CV or application. (e.g., “*confidently*”, “*positive*”, “*initiative*”)

2. Competencies & Statement of Competency

Competencies

A competency is a skill, ability or, typically, behaviour that you have demonstrated. The [HES Competency Framework](#) provides detailed examples of the types of behaviours we are looking for or an explanation of that particular competency to help you meet these in your statement of competency and at interview stage.

When considering your competency, you should be telling a clear story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. Make sure that the examples are specific and do not talk about your role in general terms.

You can consider breaking down your examples using the STAR technique:

- Situation – give a brief outline of the context
- Task – What did you want to achieve? What were your aims / objectives?
- Action – What did you personally do?
- Result – What was the result?

Statement of Competency

A Statement of Competency outlines how your skills and experience meet the specific criteria that the recruiting manager is looking for in the job that you are applying for. It is more aligned to a personal statement or a covering letter. Find out more information on writing a statement of competency and examples in Appendix 1.

Hints & Tips:

- A statement of competency should be no more than two sides of an A4 page. Try not to cram too much in.
- It should include important information relating to the specific criteria in the job description. Avoid repetition.
- Proof-read and edit. Perhaps ask a colleague or a friend to review your application.
- Use action words: Led, Arranged, Managed, Organised, Controlled, Communicated, Monitored, Implemented, Decided, Supervised, Achieved, Repaired, Planned
- Tailor your statement of competency directly to be relevant to the role you are applying for.
- Make sure you include all the information they have asked for in the job description.
- Ensure all information is honest and relevant. Remove all jargon, or make sure you explain yourself fully.
- You may find it useful to keep a copy of your submitted statement of competency to refer to if you are invited to an interview.

3. Top tips for successful Interviews

Pre-interview

- Be prepared. Have all your interview notes already to go. Have your travel plans (if required) to the interview all arranged and sorted.
- Re-check the job description so you can match up your key skills and experience.
- Practice responding to interview questions either on your own or with a friend/colleague.
- Remember you can't be trained in confidence – confidence comes from knowledge. The more knowledge you have about yourself and the company the more confident you will appear to be.
- Think positive – visualise a positive interview
- Nerves tend to make us speed up, so while you're waiting for your interview, breathe in through your nose very slowly for a count of three. Then breathe out through your nose for a count of three. Repeat this three times. In that time, you will have significantly lowered your heart rate and when you speak, you'll find you won't rush.

During your interview

- Keep positive thoughts in your mind
- Think before you speak. Take time to process the question and take a deep breath before you answer.
- Keep the STAR approach in mind when answering the questions.
- Use 'I' statements
- Avoid hypothetical answers or defining the competency (e.g., "I would do this" or "Teamwork is important because...").
- If you don't understand a question – ask. It's much better to clarify what the question was than pretend you understood
- Engaging body language shows interest but remember to keep it genuine and appropriate.
- Make eye contact
- Use your own voice and speak as naturally as you can. Try not to rush through your questions.
- Refer to your notes. If you get stuck on a question, then quickly look at your notes or prompts to get you thinking again.
- Be honest. Don't exaggerate your experience or abilities. It is easy to get caught out with follow-up questions or you may find yourself unable to do the job if you got it dishonestly.

4. Appendix 1 - How to write a Statement of Competence

1. Avoid generic references to your abilities

Whenever possible, provide meaningful examples that match your skills to specific problem-solving activities or tangible business results you've worked on in your career. Any candidate can say they possess a desirable skill. To make an impression, you need to show recruiting managers examples of your skills in action. For example:

Too vague: "My skills would be a great fit for your organisation."

More specific: "In my role as a steward, I am frequently required to provide exceptional customer service in difficult circumstances on site. Such as resolving ticketing issues, responding to customer queries or providing retail assistance. I take personal and professional pride in exceeding customers' expectations."

Too vague: "I'm a proactive team player."

More specific: "In my current job, I led the development of an internal recycling and waste reduction initiative. I assembled a volunteer team of people who were enthusiastic about the goal. Together, this group contributed to a 25% reduction in solid waste production at the company within six months."

2. Keep it short and to the point

Focus on the details that are most important for the job. Read the job description closely to understand the requirements of the job. Think of examples from your past that fit those requirements, including your proudest professional achievements. Choose one or two and match them directly to the desired experience or qualifications the hiring manager is looking for, using just a few detailed but concise sentences. What traits or behaviours has the employer asked for in the job description.

3. Examples

Here are two examples. First, read the job description, then read the statement of competence.

Example 1: Administrative Assistant

Job Description

In this role, you will be supporting managers and other senior-level colleagues by managing their calendars, arranging travel, filing expense reports, and performing other administrative tasks.

Strong interpersonal skills, attention to detail, and problem-solving skills will be critical to success.

Qualifications:

- 5+ years of experience providing high-level admin support to diverse teams in a fast-paced environment
- College education or equivalent work experience
- Excellent Microsoft Office Skills with an emphasis on Outlook and Excel

- Self-motivated and highly organised
- Team player who works well with minimal supervision

Statement of Competence

I would like to apply for the position of administrative assistant at HES.

I have a proven track record of success in administrative roles, most recently in my current job as an administrative coordinator. For example, I proactively stepped in to coordinate a summit for our senior leaders last year. I arranged travel and accommodation for a group of 15 managers from across the organisation, organised meals and activities, collaborated with our internal events team, and ensured that everything ran according to schedule over the two-day summit. Due to the positive feedback, I received afterwards, I have been given the responsibility of doubling the number of attendees for the event this year and leading an internal team to get the job done.

I have excellent Microsoft Outlook, Excel and Word skills and have gained a range of administrative experience including calendar management, arranging travel and filing reports. My colleagues have complimented me on my interpersonal skills, attention to detail and problem-solving skills. I am self-motivated, organised and keen to work collaboratively in teams.

After researching your organisation, I am pleased to see that your mission and vision are a match for my own career goals. I see that you set high standards and that there are advancement opportunities for self-motivated individuals like me, both here in the UK and overseas.

Example 2: Membership Assistant

Job Description

We are looking for a Membership Assistant, to form part of the Membership & CRM Team. This role will support the team to carry out a wide range of customer service and administration duties in line with the Historic Scotland Membership Scheme.

Responsibilities:

- *Respond to enquiries from customers. These will be telephone calls, letters, emails and face to face meetings*
- *Prepare monthly reports by extracting information from the database into Excel*
- *Attend key member events and recruitment promotions, out of office hours*
- *Site visits to train and assist other members of staff.*
- *Sign up members to Gift Aid.*
- *Work with the current database on a daily basis and develop a thorough understanding of the system. This will include, adding new records onto database, updating existing records, and investigate and correct any problems.*

Essential Requirements:

- *General administration/office experience*

- *Proven experience of working in a customer focussed environment*
- *Working knowledge of Microsoft packages including Word, Excel, and Outlook*
- *Good attention to detail*

Desirable Requirements:

- *A good working knowledge of a customer database, ideally The Raiser's Edge*
- *Knowledge of Gift Aid*
- *Driving licence or access to independent modes of transport.*

Statement of Competence

I would like to apply for the position of Membership Assistant at HES.

In my current role as Front of House Assistant I am required to be highly organised and efficient, working to tight deadlines and competing priorities. My daily responsibilities included front of house reception duties, sorting mail, filing, booking meetings, taking minutes at team meetings, processing donations.

Acting as the first point of contact in my current role, I have proven experience of working in a customer-focused environment meeting visitors and staff when they come on site. I have also assisted in organising and attending events for a number of different stakeholders. From these experiences I understand what good customer service looks like and believe I possess the customer service skills to build and maintain positive relationships to excel in customer service role.

I have immense experience using Microsoft Office and possess excellent IT and numeracy skills. In my previous role as Payroll Officer, I was required to have a good attention to detail to ensure the information I was inputting into excel spreadsheets or the Fusion system was correct to avoid issues/errors with employees pay. In both my previous and current roles, I used Outlook for general work correspondence and responding to customer queries. This variety of experience has given me the confidence to work independently across various programs and software. I can adapt my existing knowledge of and experience using customer databases to work effectively on the Raiser's Edge system.

In regard to the desirable requirements for the position, I have a full UK driver's license. I also have a working knowledge of Gift Aid, having used it in various capacities in the past.

Thank you for reviewing my statement. I look forward to meeting with you for an interview.

5. Appendix 2 - Additional Support Resources

Keystones

- [The Star Treatment](#)
- [How to Ace a Video Interview](#)
- [Handling Interview Questions](#)
- [Six Ways to Ace an Interview](#)
- [Tips for Successful Interviews](#)
- [How to Ace a Video Interview](#)
- [How to Improve Your Interview Technique](#)
- [The Effective Communicator](#)
- [How To Be a Communications Ninja](#)