Cheshire
Fire & Rescue Service

**GUIDANCE NOTE FOR APPLICANTS**

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service embraces change and prides itself on being one of the most dynamic and successful fire services in the United Kingdom. We believe that an outstanding organisation requires outstanding people at every level. We are committed to delivering a high-quality recruitment experience and actively work to remove barriers to equal opportunity throughout the process.

**Our commitment to you is:**

- We will treat you with respect, courtesy and support throughout the recruitment process.
- Any written communication will include a contact name and details.
- Information that you provide will be treated as confidential and will be seen only by those involved in the recruitment process.
- Any disabled applicant who meets the essential requirements of the role will be invited to the next stage of the process.
- If you do not hear from us within 3 weeks of the closing date, please assume that you have not been successful this time. Unfortunately, we cannot offer feedback at the application stage.
- If you are selected to progress to the next stage, you will be advised as soon as possible.
- We aim to give you at least one week's notice of an interview / assessment date.
- We will make reasonable adjustments to help you attend where requested.
- Personal details will be removed from your application before shortlisting to ensure fairness.
- We ask you to complete an equal opportunities questionnaire, this information is only used to monitor our recruitment process.
- If a post is suitable for job share or part-time working, it will be stated on the job advert.
- We will not contact your referees unless you give your permission. We will however need to obtain references before offering employment.
- We will make a decision as soon as possible after the assessment and aim to inform you within one week.
- Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback at interview stage.

**BEFORE COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION:**

Your application is the first step in the recruitment process. It will be reviewed by a panel of Cheshire Fire and Rescue staff, including a manager from the hiring department. The panel will assess your suitability for the role by comparing the details you provide with the job description and person specification

You may submit a typed or a handwritten application. If you hand write your application, please ensure that your handwriting is clearly legible.

**Please ensure that your supporting statement is no more than the maximum number of words stipulated on the application form. Anything over this will be discarded and not marked against the shortlisting criteria.**

The **supporting information** is a key part of your application so take your time to complete this. You should carefully read the job description and advert, ensuring you evidence the essential criteria in the person specification and your ability to meet the principal responsibilities detailed in the job description in your supporting statement.

When reviewing your application we will look for evidence that you have the skills and experience required for the role.

For example, if one of the requirements on the person specification is '*Excellent attention to detail'.*

***A poor answer would be*** *– 'I have excellent attention to detail.'*

***A strong answer might be*** *– 'I have excellent attention to detail. For example, when carrying out a task I ensure that I have all the relevant information and equipment before I start. I then follow a check list that I designed to make sure that no element of the task is missed. Before handing the work onto the next person, I run a final check to make sure that all the data is complete and correct. Where possible I ask for feedback so that I can make improvements for next time'.*

The poor answer is just a statement. The strong answer gives clear, practical evidence of the skill.

When you have completed the supporting statement, you must make sure that you submit it and your CV or application form to the HR Resourcing Team before the closing time and date.
Your application may not be considered if it is received after the closing date.

Keep a copy of your application to help you prepare if invited to an interview or assessment.

Please ensure that you include a contact phone number and email address. It is important that you complete the **Equal Opportunities** section of the application as this helps us to monitor our recruitment process. You will also need to complete the declaration form.

If you are successful, we will ask you for **2 referees** as part of the pre-employment process**.** As previously stated, they will not be contacted without your permission.

All applicants are required to disclose details of any unspent convictions in accordance with the **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**. Any disclosure of an unspent conviction will not automatically disqualify your application unless the nature of the offence renders you unsuitable for the post. All such disclosures will be considered on an individual basis.

For employees who will have contact with children or vulnerable adults in the course of their duties, an **Enhanced Disclosure** will be carried out. For further information on DBS checks, please refer to www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs

If you are successful at interview and offered a position, we will carry out right-to-work checks and request original certificates for the educational qualifications listed in your application.

**DATA PROTECTION ACT 2018 (DPA)**

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 it is good practice to know the composition of people applying for roles within the Service so that we can build an accurate workforce picture. Through the application form we ask for your name so we can effectively manage the logistics for application and the interview and assessment process thereafter (if your application is successful). Your name, or any identifiable information will not be shared with other organisations and will not be used for any other purpose. We ask for your help to develop an understanding of workforce diversity so we can monitor any potential barriers faced, however providing this information is voluntary.

The information you provide will be held by Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service for the purposes outlined above and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and other associated data protection legislation as well as our and duties under the Equality Act 2010. We will use the information collected from you to report on the composition of applicants. Your information will be used to form statistics and reports that are high level and will not identify you or any other individual.

Your information will only be held in an identifiable form for as long as is necessary by the Service and in accordance with their retention schedule. You have certain rights under data protection legislation regarding your personal data, which includes the right to access data held about yourself, to ensure it is accurate and to ask it to be deleted or no longer processed. You also have the right to complain about the processing of your information if you are not happy about any aspect of the processing.

For more information about your rights and to contact our data protection officer, please see our full privacy notice on the Service website
https://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/your-service/gdpr-data-protection/
You can also contact the Service via email, telephone or written letter.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO RECEIVING YOUR APPLICATION.**