



# Recruitment Process - Candidate Toolkit

## Contents

<b>Contents .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>We are Guide Dogs .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>How we Hire .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>“Our dogs are our icons. Our people are our heroes.” .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Disability Confident and Visibly Better Commitments.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Safer Recruitment .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Our Recruitment Process .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Application .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Top Tips for Applications .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Shortlisting .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Interviews .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Interview Questions .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Top Tips for Interviews .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Requesting Adjustments .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Feedback for You .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Feedback for Us.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Who to Contact.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>End of document.....</b>	<b>11</b>



## We are Guide Dogs

From our start in 1931, by two amazing women and just four guide dogs, we have come a long way. Since our humble beginning, we've trained over 37,500 guide dogs - that's more than one new guide dog every day since those first four partnerships.

Whilst we have grown as an organisation, our purpose has not changed. We are here to help people with sight loss live the life they choose. We want to help people live actively, with the confidence to get out and about, to live independently, on their own terms, and to live well, helping people through the emotional and practical challenges of living with sight loss.

We are proud to be the world's largest assistance dog organisation and we're best known for our iconic guide dogs, they are where we started, but there's so much more to us now. We now have a range of services available, all rooted in our purpose and designed to help people with sight loss live the life they choose.

We are here to provide support to people with vision impairments from the day they are born, and it is important that we can do this. There are around two million people with a vision impairment living in the UK, and this figure is expected to double by 2050. Of this number, around 35,000 are children and young people. Every six minutes in the UK, one more person loses their sight.

Our vision is a future where every person with sight loss has the confidence and support they need to live the life they choose. By strengthening our core services, and exploring new ones, embracing technologies, digitising some of the ways we provide services, and collaborating with other charities and organisations, we are supporting thousands more people living with a vision impairment.

Our vision for the future is exciting. But it is also ambitious. We wouldn't be able to achieve it without our people helping us to get there. We are all passionate about making a difference to the lives of people with sight loss. It's our skill, empathy and dedication that make our guide dogs and other essential services possible.

Nobody else does what Guide Dogs does.



## How we Hire

**“Our dogs are our icons. Our people are our heroes.”**

Recruitment at Guide Dogs focuses on being inclusive, engaging and fair. We build meaningful connections with candidates, ensure open communication, embed equitable practices that reduce bias and create equal opportunities for all.

By delivering a positive experience for candidates and hiring managers alike, we look to attract diverse talent and support the Organisation in building a workforce ready for the future.

Whether you are carrying a lead or a laptop, raising money to deliver life changing services or supporting one of the largest communities of Visually Impaired people in the world, we are all passionate about making a difference to those we support.

This means recruiting and retaining the best, most skilled and committed people and ensuring that our processes support them to perform to the best of their abilities.

We believe that everyone should have an equal opportunity to showcase their skills and talents during the recruitment process. That's why we are committed to ensuring that our process is fair, inclusive and accessible to all. Our goal is to create an environment where you can bring your true self to the process and have a positive experience, regardless of the outcome. We value diversity and want to make sure that everyone feels welcome and supported throughout the recruitment journey.

### **Disability Confident and Visibly Better Commitments**

We are proud to be recognised as a Disability Confident Employer and a Visibly Better Employer, and we're committed to providing an inclusive and accessible recruitment process. You can find out more on our [careers pages](#).

### **Safer Recruitment**

We follow Safer Recruitment practices, which means we consider the safeguarding of the vulnerable and young people we work with throughout our

recruitment process. It allows us to do the best we can to make sure the people we recruit have the right motivations for working with us and that everyone shares our values and demonstrates our behaviours. Our process may look a little different to others you have been through but it's all for the right reasons.

## Our Recruitment Process

### Application

It's great you've found a role at Guide Dogs that interests you. Now it's time to complete your online application.

If you are a new candidate, you will need to register on our candidate portal. You can do this using your Facebook, Google or LinkedIn profiles. Alternatively, you can register by completing the 'Create a New Profile' section. If you have already registered with us, you simply have to login using your email and password. When you are ready, click apply to start your application.

Your application consists of the following sections:

1. **Important information** - just a few things to keep in mind before you start your application.
2. **Inclusive recruitment** - our commitment to following an inclusive process and whether you want your application considered under our Disability Confident Scheme as you consider yourself to have a disability.
3. **About you** - your personal details, right to work status and criminal convictions declaration.
4. **Additional questions** - you will be asked to complete a maximum of 6 application questions, which will allow us to shortlist you against the essential criteria for the role.
5. **Additional details** - your work experience, professional and academic qualifications, referee details if the role you are applying for requires a disclosure check. A declaration regarding the integrity of your application and information that you share.
6. **Demographic information** - your diversity information. You will be asked to declare if you have a disability. We ask this information to ensure we are meeting our DE&I strategy aims and provide recruitment

adjustments to those who need it and comply with our commitment to the Disability Confident Scheme.

The application form is your opportunity to highlight relevant skills and experience that demonstrate your suitability for the position you are applying for. These will then be assessed against the essential criteria of the job description.

If you require any support during the application process, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We're always on hand to help and you can find our contact details [here](#).

## Top Tips for Applications

- Review the Job Description, paying particular attention to the essential and desirable criteria.
- Ensure you use specific examples to illustrate the skill or experience you are referring to, using the STAR technique to build a response which is relevant.
- You may have a question about your career history. We don't need to see a chronological list of your previous roles and what you did. We are most interested in seeing what experience, skills and strengths you have gained so far in your career.
- Preparing your answers in a word document can be a helpful way to gather relevant information and ensure you provide enough detail to demonstrate the essential and desirable criteria.
- Request recruitment adjustments to help you to perform to the best of your abilities.
- Focus on your individual contribution, use "I" instead of "we" to highlight your achievements.
- Have fun, this is your time to show us who you are and what skills and experiences you bring with you, as an individual.

## Shortlisting

Applications are typically reviewed by the hiring manager as they come in and will be screened against criteria which is set out within the job description.

Applications are scored by at least two different people and applicants who score highest are then invited to interview.

Any candidate who has declared a disability will be shortlisted in line with the Disability Confident Scheme and offered an invite to interview if their application demonstrates they meet the essential criteria.

Once shortlisting is complete, all applicants will receive communication from Guide Dogs, usually by email, to advise of the outcome of their application.

## **Interviews**

If invited to interview you will receive an email asking you to confirm a proposed slot or select an interview date and time.

All roles will involve a face-to-face interview, either in person or virtually, however, some may also involve other forms of assessment. The assessment process followed varies role by role. The job advert may contain details of the planned assessment process or you will be given more details if shortlisted.

Our standard interviews typically take around an hour, however, it may be longer if there is an assessment exercises included or if you have asked for a recruitment adjustment as part of your own individual needs.

Our interview process includes a minimum of two different interviewers. This approach is designed to promote diversity of thought and ensure a fair and balanced assessment.

In some cases, other colleagues may also be involved, to support with additional assessments. We believe this approach allows us to make informed and unbiased decisions, ultimately leading to the selection of the most qualified and suitable candidates.

All interviews or assessment exercises used are tailored to be able to find the most suitable candidate for the role. They are also designed to give applicants more insight into the role and to provide a realistic expectation of the position to allow candidates to decide if it is suitable for them as well.

## Interview Questions

We use a mixture of behaviour based and technical questions. For roles that involve work with children, young people and adults, we'll also include safeguarding questions. You will also be given an opportunity to ask us questions about the role or more about Guide Dogs.

## Behavioural Questions

Behaviour-based questions focus on examples of how you have behaved in specific situations. This approach helps us to better understand your past experiences and how you may approach situations in the future.

Our behaviours capture the essence of what it is to be Guide Dogs PEOPLE, whether staff or volunteer. Our behaviours are both new and yet rooted in our heritage; they reflect how we are but also how we aspire to be. They are shared and individual.

- **Person-centred** - We are a group of people working to help each person affected by sight loss. We listen and recognise that every individual is different in where they've come from and where they're going. We are open, empathetic and inclusive. We place the person at the centre of every decision.
- **Expert** - We are specialists in what we do. We are committed to excellence and will never stop innovating. We respect our history but seek out ways to adapt and improve and are always willing to learn.
- **Optimistic** - We are relentless in our belief that people with vision impairment can lead the life they choose. We are passionate about helping each person, committed to challenging barriers and proud of who we are and what we achieve.
- **Partner** - We only change lives when we collaborate. We build valued relationships with donors. We work together with our service users and colleagues, volunteers, and partners - and our dogs, of course - to deliver great outcomes. We support and develop each other.
- **Lead-by-example** - We can all be a guide. We take the lead and then hand it over, empowering people to make progress without us. We gain trust by having faith in others and influence by example. We do what we say we will.
- **Engage** - We cannot change lives if we look on from the side-lines. We get involved, take ownership and feel responsible for all we do, think

and say. We celebrate wins big and small and we hold ourselves and each other to account.

## **Technical Questions**

Technical questions are focussed on assessing skills and experience. The skills tested will depend largely on the job you're interviewing for. Our Job Descriptions outline the specific skills we require for each role to give you an idea of what we are looking for and against which you may be assessed.

## **Safeguarding Questions**

Safeguarding Questions are a way of determining what is expected to be demonstrated by staff who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. We typically ask 1-2 questions on this to assess appropriate motivations and safeguarding awareness. You can find information which will help you prepare for this type of question on our [Safeguarding Page](#).

## **Additional Assessments**

At Guide Dogs, we understand that no two roles are the same. That's why we use additional assessments to ensure we identify the best candidate for each job. These assessments could include in-tray exercises, practical assessments and assessment centres, for example.

### **In-tray exercises**

Our in-tray exercises simulate work scenarios that you may encounter in the role. For example, we might assess how you approach multiple requests or different demands on your time.

### **Practical assessments**

Our practical assessments are used to assess practical application of your skills and knowledge. For example, for dog handling roles, we'll ask you to complete a task with a dog or if the role involves training and coaching, we might ask you to teach us a skill.

### **Assessment Centres**

If we are recruiting for several positions, we may use assessments centres to allow us to complete a variety of exercises within one day. They are often a combination of assessment types and may include a group practical assessment, in tray exercise and an individual interview.

## Top Tips for Interviews

- Speak to the hiring manager, a team member or the Recruitment Consultant about the role, area or Guide Dogs.
- Request any adjustments that might help you during the process via the Recruitment team.
- When interviewing with us, try to stay relevant to the questions and ensure you demonstrate your abilities. A good way to do this can be to use the star technique:
  - S - what was the situation?
  - T - What was the task you had to do?
  - A - what action did you take?
  - R - what was the result?
- The Vision Impairment Community we support is at the heart of all we do at Guide Dogs, so it might be worth thinking about how you can demonstrate your understanding or experience with our service users.
- For virtual interviews, prior to the interview, test your internet connection, microphone and camera to make sure they are working ahead of the interview timeslot.

As with shortlisting, all applicants will receive communication from Guide Dogs to advise of the outcome of their interview.

You can find out more about our recruitment process on our [careers page](#).

## Requesting Adjustments

We want to ensure that every candidate can be the best version of themselves during their recruitment journey with us. This is why we encourage applicants to let us know if they require any adjustments for any stage of the process.

Adjustments are individual and we will, therefore, consider these carefully, without judgement and without bias. You don't need to disclose a disability. We will only ask about adjustments needed for the recruitment process. Any adjustments required to undertake the role will be discussed should you be successful and accept an offer of employment with us.

Our Recruitment team are always available to discuss adjustments with you at application stage. However, if you are invited to an interview, you may

choose to discuss these with the hiring manager, their contact details will be provided to you with your interview invitation confirmation.

We have created the following more detailed Guide to Recruitment Adjustments [Recruitment-Adjustments--V3.0-.pdf](#), the list below gives you some ideas of what is available:

- Requesting interview questions are provided in writing at the interview
- Asking to be interviewed virtually
- Asking to be interviewed on the ground floor
- Asking for the room to be well lit or lights dimmed or off completely

## **Feedback for You**

We understand the importance of gaining feedback and offer this to all candidates who have attended an interview with us. This is likely to come in the form of a telephone call from the hiring manager or another person involved in the interview process. Please let us know if you prefer a different format, such as an email.

## **Feedback for Us**

We may ask for your feedback on the recruitment process with Guide Dogs, in order to continually measure our performance and continuously improve. We sometimes send surveys, or you can contact us directly via email or call.

## **Who to Contact**

### **Recruitment Team**

Email: [recruitment@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@guidedogs.org.uk)

Phone: 0118 3540345 ext. 3

To enable us to help you, please include the job title and location of the vacancy in your communication, as well as your full name used in your application.

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