

GREATER**LONDON**AUTHORITY

get a job

with the Greater London Authority

## **Contents**

Introduction .....	3
About the GLA .....	3
Leading London's equalities agenda .....	3
Jobs at the GLA .....	4
Working for the GLA .....	4
Where jobs are advertised .....	4
How to apply.....	5
What information will you receive? .....	5
Completing the application form.....	5
Successful interviews.....	6
Other selection methods .....	7
If at first you don't succeed ... ..	8
Appendix – How to complete an application form .....	9

## **Introduction**

This booklet is designed to help you apply for a job at the GLA.

Working for the GLA makes a difference to the lives of Londoners. We have implemented policies and plans for improving services to Londoners, and have delivered new initiatives to promote equalities, sustainable development and health.

We now wish to go further. We want to develop London as an exemplary sustainable world city. We will achieve this by ensuring that London is a prosperous, green, fair and accessible city. In short, we will ensure that London is a city for people.

We also care about being a good employer. We are planning new initiatives to support new ways of working. We provide excellent development programmes and can offer an imaginative range of flexible working arrangements. Our aim is for people to feel happy and proud to be working here.

If you like working with people in a high profile environment, enjoy hard work, and welcome responsibility then you will be interested in working for the GLA. This booklet will help you achieve your ambition.

## **About the GLA**

The GLA is a form of strategic city wide government for London. It is made up of a directly elected Mayor, and the separately elected London Assembly. Both the Mayor and the London Assembly are elected for fixed terms of four years.

The Mayor has a range of specific powers and duties, including a general power to do anything that will promote economic and social development, and environmental improvement, in London. The Mayor sets out plans and policies covering transport, buildings and land use, economic development and regeneration, culture, and a range of environmental issues. Before using many of his powers the Mayor must consult with Londoners and, in all cases, the Mayor must promote equality of opportunity.

The London Assembly has 25 elected members. The London Assembly provides a check and a balance on the Mayor, by scrutinising the Mayor's policies and performance, and holding powers to amend the Mayor's budget. The London Assembly also investigates issues of Londonwide significance, and provides members to serve on the Metropolitan Police Authority, the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, and the London Development Agency.

## **Leading London's equalities agenda**

London is home to nearly eight million people speaking over three hundred languages. Our aim is to represent London's cultural diversity in everything we do. Our vision is to make our world famous capital an even better place to live and work.

The GLA ensures it serves the interests of all Londoners and communities equally, regardless of their religion, race, gender, age, disability or sexuality.

The GLA wants to ensure that the people who work for us are truly representative of Londoners. We have therefore set ourselves the target of having a workforce which is 52% female, 25% from black and ethnic minority communities, and 10% with a disability. We have set these targets for all levels of our workforce, and we positively encourage applications from people from within these groups.

## **Jobs at the GLA**

Around 700 people work for the GLA. There are many specialist areas of work at the GLA, providing sufficient opportunities to satisfy most interests and careers.

GLA jobs are varied and diverse, but include roles in the following areas:

- Research and analysis
- Secretarial and administration
- Planning
- Security
- Press and marketing
- Reception
- Facilities management
- Project management
- Events
- Legal
- Information technology
- Policy development
- Financial services
- Human resources

An organisation chart for the GLA can be found on our website.

## **Working for the GLA**

People work for the GLA to take up challenging roles through which they can help others and improve Londoners' lives. In return, the GLA offers working conditions and benefits which are comparable with the best in London. Our salaries match the market leaders, and we offer generous annual leave and pension provisions.

- 30 days annual leave
- 37 hours per week
- Incremental salary scheme
- Final salary pension scheme
- Interest free season ticket loan
- Interest free bicycle loan

We have a performance review scheme which is designed to help people carry out their duties to the best of their ability and to develop their careers in order to reach their full potential. We support this scheme with excellent training and development programmes.

## **Where jobs are advertised**

All our jobs are advertised on our web site – [www.london.gov.uk/jobs.jsp](http://www.london.gov.uk/jobs.jsp), as well as on [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com), [www.totaljobs.com](http://www.totaljobs.com), [www.jobsgopublic.com](http://www.jobsgopublic.com), [www.youareable.com](http://www.youareable.com). We also advertise in the Guardian and minority titles and occasionally in specialist trade publications.

## **How to apply**

Details of how to apply for jobs will be explained in the advertisement. All the information you will need to make an application such as an application form and job description can be found on our website. You can also telephone or e-mail a request for a job pack.

## **What information will you receive?**

Normally you will receive:

- general information about the GLA
- information about the team which has the vacancy
- an application form which will ask you for your personal details, details of your work experience, your qualifications/education and importantly, how you think you measure up to the requirements for the post
- a job description which outlines what you would be required to do in the job, to whom you would report and the responsibilities (for people and resources) attached to the job
- a person specification which gives details of the experience, skills, knowledge and abilities required for the post
- details about the employment terms and conditions for the job

## **Completing the application form**

The purpose of completing the application form is to enable you to be shortlisted for interview. Completed application forms are matched against the requirements set out in the person specification to create a shortlist. GLA application forms are available in three formats:

- The RTF version available online may be read by most word processor software and can be filled in electronically. Once completed the form should be returned by email to [glajobs@london.gov.uk](mailto:glajobs@london.gov.uk).
- The PDF version available online may be printed off, filled in and returned by post or fax.
- A printed application form may be obtained from the GLA recruitment team, filled in and returned by post or fax.

You should study the job description and person specification carefully before completing your application form. Whether you are shortlisted for interview will depend on how well you can demonstrate that you meet the criteria listed in the person specification.

The following tips are designed to help you complete the application form as effectively as possible:

- Study all the information you have been sent about the job and the application form carefully before you begin to complete the form. Ensure that you are clear about what you are being asked to do.
- Make sure that your application is specific to the job you are applying for. A standard application form, which you have prepared before, may not address all of the items in the person specification.
- The GLA does not accept curriculum vitae (CVs) on their own.

- Think about the extent to which you possess the skills and experience necessary to do the job. You should then provide information about skills and experience which address all of the items in the person specification. If possible, try to do so in the order in which they are listed.
- It may be helpful to do a rough draft of the form first so as to avoid mistakes and repetition. Alternatively, you may wish to use the electronic version of the application form available from our web site.
- Give examples of your skills and experience and write in a positive way. Remember to write about those things which you have personally been responsible for.
- Make sure that you complete all sections of the application form.
- Select those aspects of your experience, skills and interests that are relevant to the job. Remind yourself of your qualities and skills that you may take for granted.
- Remember to consider relevant skills and experience acquired outside of paid work - for example, experience gained from community or volunteer work, or in your leisure interests.
- When listing your previous jobs, ensure that dates are correct and in the right order, stating your most recent employment first.
- Make sure that you return the form before the closing date, and keep a copy for yourself.

If you have a disability, which makes writing difficult, it is possible that the application can be completed in a different way. You should contact the Human Resources Group and discuss this with them.

We ask all applicants to declare whether they have a disability. The reason for doing this is to ensure we fulfil our commitment of interviewing all disabled applicants who fully meet the job criteria.

The above tips should help you to complete an application form as effectively as possible. An example of how to respond to a specific question is given in the appendix.

Unfortunately due to the large volumes of applications that the GLA receives we are not able to offer feedback to those unsuccessful at application stage.

### **Successful interviews**

The purpose of an interview is to identify the best candidate for the job. A panel of two or three people will usually interview you. The length of the interview will depend on the level of post but, on average, it will last for about 30 to 45 minutes. For most of this time the interviewers will ask you questions which will all relate to the requirements listed in the person specification. At the end of the process you will be given some time to ask a few questions yourself. Think about any questions you wish to raise in advance.

You can begin to prepare for an interview by thinking of any previous experience of interviews during school/university or during your working life to date. Try to recall what worked well in these interviews and try to pinpoint what lessons you learned from these experiences.

The following tips will help you perform in interviews as effectively as possible:

- Before your interview, read through the person specification again. This document describes the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to carry out the job. The questions asked at interview will relate to the person specification.

- Try to predict what the questions will be, and ask a friend or colleague to help you to do this. Prepare answers for the questions you have identified. Write out the information needed for each answer. If there are gaps in your knowledge try to find out further information.
- Practise saying your answers out loud. Even if you know the theory, you will have to be able to convince the panel on the day. Ask a colleague to put the questions to you, and then to give you feedback on your answers.
- All candidates are nervous in interviews, and panels make allowances for that. Some people may talk too much, and other may talk too quickly. If you identify how you react when nervous, then you will be able to address it on the day.
- Aim to arrive a few minutes early so that you have time to compose yourself. Take a pen and paper, and bring some notes with you if you want to. The panel will not mind if you want to write down part of the question or refer briefly to your notes. You should avoid reading them aloud or searching through piles of papers, however, as this could distract you.
- At the start of the interview the chair of the panel will explain the interview structure to you. If anything is unclear, ask for clarification.
- The panel members will take it in turns to ask you questions. Listen carefully to them. If necessary, pause for a few seconds to make sure that you understand exactly what you are being asked before you start to answer. Resist the temptation to launch into a prepared answer which may not fit the question. It will not reflect badly on you if you ask for the question to be repeated or explained.
- Remember that the panel is trying to find out as much about you as possible. They are not trying to catch you out. If you have difficulty in answering a question, then the panel will try to prompt you. For example, the panel may ask, "would you like to say a bit more about...". This will give you a chance to add more to your answer.
- Do not assume that the panel members know everything about you or your work, even if you have written about it on your application form. Give details and examples of how you meet the person specification. Take every opportunity to sell yourself even if this feels rather artificial.
- Do not worry if you get stuck at any point in the interview and can't think what to say. Ask if you can leave the question for the moment, and come back to it later in the interview.
- Finally, remember that this is your interview and not the panel's. Try to use the time to your best advantage.

The above tips should help you to be successful in your interview. If you are not offered the post, then you should contact the GLA's Human Resources Group and ask for feedback. The Human Resources Group will give you information on the strengths and weaknesses of your interview against the person specification and pointers for future interviews.

### **Other selection methods**

In addition to interviews, the GLA may also use other methods to help choose the best candidate for a job. Common selection methods include work related tests to examine your computer, organisational, team working, writing or numerical skills. For senior jobs, you may be tested on your analytical or presentation skills. If other methods are to be used you will be notified in advance in the letter inviting you to interview. If you are asked to undertake a test ensure that you fully understand the instructions and ask questions if you are unclear about what is being asked of you.

**If at first you don't succeed ...**

The GLA is a popular choice for applicants, and competition for jobs can be strong. If you are not successful first time round; please do consider trying again.

Keep an eye on our web site and London news media for future job opportunities. In addition, keep up to date with GLA activities through the Londoner, local news media, and through our web site. This information will help you to know more about what the GLA does, and how the people who work contribute to our business.

Review your knowledge and experience and take advantage of any opportunities to learn new skills, which may help you in future, applications. General attributes relevant to most GLA roles include using your initiative, working in teams, communication skills, customer care, and IT skills.



## Appendix – How to complete an application form

When completing an application form **do**:

Make clear what **you** did – use “I” not “we”;

Describe **your** role;

Provide evidence of the skills and abilities that **you** used and the outcome;

Ensure that **your** example provides evidence of the skills and abilities sought

### Do not:

Provide unnecessary detail;

Include generalisms, e.g. “I am always considerate to my colleagues,” be specific.

Include Job descriptions, e.g., “My job involves...”

Paraphrase the criteria, e.g., “I speak and write effectively”

Theorise e.g., “I would always deal with a complaint by...”

You may wish to consider completing the form in draft first, then compare your examples against the criteria given above, to ensure that your examples provide clear evidence of how you have demonstrated the targeted skills and abilities.

The following example is provided to help you with the presentation of your evidence.

### How to provide evidence of skills and abilities

For example if you providing evidence for the skill – ‘Analyses information’

Rather than describe only the outcome, as follows:

*I created comprehensive training and development records for 120 staff, which required me to analyse what was required and draw appropriate conclusions.*

Provide evidence of **your** behaviour in relation to the skills and abilities **you** used i.e. describe **your** role and what **you** did, and the outcome as follows:

*One of my key responsibilities is to co-ordinate training and development applications for 120 staff. Without comprehensive records, for each member of staff I had to establish:*

- Had courses been applied for?
- Which training unit held which courses?
- Had staff made previous applications, which were unavailable to me?
- Had previous courses been evaluated with their line managers?
- Were the courses still relevant/ required?

- Had staff since left?
- Firstly, I created a spreadsheet using Excel. I split all 120 staff into their 5 teams.
- I then created folders for every member of staff and stored them alphabetically.
- I updated the spreadsheet with all the previous information available.
- I emailed each member of staff individually that an application form for (copied to their line manager in case of absence etc.)
- I asked for updates of their applications by a certain date.
- I then emailed the whole unit to say that if they had not received a personal email form me, relating to training applications, it meant that I had no outstanding applications for them.

**Greater London Authority**

City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
London SE1 2AA

**[www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk)**

Enquiries **020 7983 4100**  
Minicom **020 7983 4458**  
Email **[glajobs@london.gov.uk](mailto:glajobs@london.gov.uk)**

Jan 2006