



Helpful Information for Candidates

when Applying for Positions within Berneslai Homes



Introduction

This leaflet contains useful information to help you complete your application form and assist you when preparing for an interview.

As an employer, Berneslai Homes recognises that its staff are its greatest asset, and the success of our organisation depends on having the right number of staff with the right skills and abilities in the right jobs. We are committed to being an excellent employer and to have fair and impartial recruitment. All appointments will be strictly on the basis of assessing the individuals' capacity to do the job.

We are committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and access in employment. We ensure there will be no discrimination against any person on the basis of age, sex, race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, gender identity, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation or marital or civil partnership status.

Access for Disabled People

We accept the "Social" Model of Disability. This states that a person's impairment does not always disable them, and more often it is the environment, working practices and attitudes, which disable people by creating barriers to employment. We are thus committed to making "reasonable adjustments" to the recruitment procedures, working practices and the working environment to accommodate people with disabilities.

The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as having a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

- substantial meaning more than minor or trivial
- long-term meaning at least a year or for the rest of the life of the person affected

To promote equality in recruitment we:

- are using the most appropriate publications and methods of advertising job vacancies
- have a wide range of flexible working policies
- monitor the overall effectiveness of our policy



1. Completing your application form

Anyone who wants to apply for a job with Berneslai Homes needs to complete an application form using our on-line system; this helps ensure that we get as much information about you as possible rather than you submitting a CV. At Berneslai Homes we do not accept CV's.

To help you decide whether or not you want to apply for one of our jobs, you need to refer to the Job Description and Employee Specification.

Job Description

This provides you with an overview of the duties that you would undertake if you got the job. It also gives information about the team you would be working in and your manager.

Employee Specification

This is a very important document, as it tells you what experience, knowledge, skills and abilities you must have to be able to do the job. You will only be invited for an interview if you can show, using examples, how you meet the criteria. The criteria on the employee specification are ranked as either Essential or Desirable.

Essential Criteria

These criteria are essential as they are needed to carry out the duties effectively from the first day in the job. You must ensure you tell us how you meet each of the essential criteria by giving us specific examples using your past experiences or knowledge. For example if the criteria states 'Ability to use initiative and work unsupervised' you must give us examples of how you have done this rather than just saying stating 'I am able to use initiative and work unsupervised.'

Desirable Criteria

These are criteria which are an additional bonus but are not necessary to carry out the duties of the job from day one. You also need to give examples of how you meet these criteria.

Application Form

The application form is broken down into 4 sections; you must ensure you complete each of these sections carefully.

The 4 sections of the application form are

1. Current and Previous Employment

In this section we want you to tell us about any employment you have had; this can be paid work, volunteering and/or work experience. You should start with the most recent. Don't worry if you have never had a job; we still want to hear about experiences you might have had at School or College.

2. Supporting Information

In this section you need to include as much information as you can to demonstrate how you meet the essential criteria from the Employee Specification using examples. It is important to try and include the right information in the appropriate box; so for example, if you are telling us about your skills please put this information in the Skills and Abilities box.

3. Education

Please make sure you use the full title of each qualification and include any grades or marks which you were awarded. If you haven't received your results yet, please include your predicted grades. You will also need to show certificates as evidence of your qualifications if you are invited for an interview.

Depending on what job you are applying for, you may have several qualifications that are not relevant to the post. Bear in mind when writing them down as a Grade B in Biology at GCSE may not be so relevant when you have a Degree in Accountancy going for a job in Finance!

4. References

You will need to provide us with the contact details of 2 people who we will contact for a reference if you are offered the job. It is important that you include their email addresses as we use these to communicate with them. We ask that the references are work related so this could be people from your current and last employer. If you haven't had a job then you could think about asking

- a teacher from School or College
- a Coach or Manager from a Sports club which you are a member
- a mentor from any volunteering work you have done

We won't accept references from your family members or friends.

5. Equality Monitoring

The information you provide in this section will not be used for the purpose of short listing, it is not seen by anyone involved in the recruitment process and will be held confidentially under the terms of the Data Protection Act and our Privacy Policy.

We monitor applications and appointments to ensure we are attracting candidates from the most diverse groups, so that we can work towards a workforce that represents our local community. Where we have under representation, we will look at what action we can take to address this.

6. Disclosure of Criminal Background

If the job you are applying for requires you to have regular contact with vulnerable groups you are required to disclose any criminal convictions including those which would normally be considered to be 'spent'.

Spent convictions are those that happened some time ago, and are not usually required to be revealed, as specified in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from employment. Each case will be judged on its own merits.

Canvassing

Any form of canvassing, directly or indirectly, of Members of the Board or employees of Berneslai Homes will result in your application form being disqualified.

This is when you try to gain an advantage over the other candidates to further your application, this can be contacting employees or members of the board about your application form.

Finally before submitting your application form please read through it to check for spelling and accuracy. If possible ask someone else to read through your application form before you submit it as they might be able to pick up on things you have missed.



Send Application

2. Submitting your application form

Once you have submitted your application form you will receive an email confirming that your application will be considered and you will be notified of the outcome once short listing has taken place.

The purpose of shortlisting is to decide who goes forward to the interviewing stage; to qualify for an interview you must have demonstrated you meet all the essential criteria on the employee specification.

All correspondence will be sent by email; therefore, it is really important that you check your email account regularly.

It can take up to four weeks to shortlist so please don't try contacting us before this date to chase up the process.



3. Preparing for the Interview

If you have received an email inviting you to an interview you now need to spend time preparing to help you perform at your best, even the most confident person is likely to experience some nerves in an interview situation. The more preparation you do, the better you will be able to show why you are the right person for the job.

For some jobs you may be required to do a written test or presentation, details of this will be sent to you via email.

All our interviews are conducted by at least 2 people. The following steps are helpful hints which will assist you in getting ready for the interview

1. Make sure you know the date and time of the interview and have made the appropriate arrangements with your employer to arrange time off to attend and made any child care arrangements.
2. Check the venue where the interview will be held, find out how to get there either by car or public transport.
3. Make sure you have the contact details of the person interviewing you should anything go wrong on the day and you need to telephone them.
4. Plan your outfit, you need to dress smartly but comfortably.
5. Research into our company, look on our website (www.berneslaihomes.co.uk) and our You Tube channel (www.youtube.com/berneslaihomes).
6. If you are required to do a presentation and know the topic beforehand, research into the topic area and recent news on the subject.

If you have notified us that you are disabled you will be asked to tell us of any arrangements we can make in order to make the interview a fair and reasonable one, for example:

- The venue is accessible for disabled people.
- Car parking is available near the interview venue.
- Someone is available to meet you at the entrance.
- A sign language interpreter is present if required.
- A friend/support person is present at the interview.
- Preferred/appropriate type of seating is available.
- Any written documentation for tests will be available in large print.

You also need to prepare for the interview itself and think about possible questions that you might be asked and practice the answers. This will help increase your self-confidence as the phases you memorise will come back to you in the interview. It will also help if you practice these with a friend or relative.

Some commonly encountered questions are

- What are or were the main responsibilities of your current or last job?
- Why do you want to join this section / department / organisation?
- What can you bring to the team?
- What are your strong and weak points?
- What is your understanding of Equality and Diversity?

If you are required to do a presentation during the interview, this also requires careful preparation, points to remember when producing this are:

- Stick to the allocated time you have been given.
- Consider a theme and how the presentation looks.
- Think about the structure of the presentation.
- Try not to read off the slides.
- Practice delivering your presentation to friends or relatives.
- Prepare for possible questions you might be asked.



4. At the interview

First impressions are very important in interviews; this is your opportunity to impress the interviewers with your experience, skills and knowledge.

It is crucial that you leave yourself enough traveling time to ensure you arrive at the interview on time. Whilst you are waiting for the interview, relax and think about what you have prepared, picture yourself enjoying the interview and answering the questions brilliantly.

Part of a successful interview is being able to present a positive image, use these tips to help you do this:

- Walk into the interview room confidently; move forward to shake hands if you feel confident enough to do so.
- Establish eye contact with the interviewers as soon as you enter the room and maintain it.
- Sit back in the chair in a relaxed but upright position.
- Smile.

The questions during the interview are designed to allow you to demonstrate how your skills and abilities match the job. Make sure you:-

- Listen attentively and ask to have the questions repeated if you don't at first understand.
- Speak clearly and confidently.
- Provide examples of your achievements and let the panel know what you have to offer.
- Emphasise your strengths but always tell the truth.
- Answer questions fully, not just Yes or No.

Don't be surprised by the awkward or unusual question. If one arises stay calm, these questions may be aimed to test you under pressure.

You will be asked questions about your knowledge of the subject area, so make sure you do plenty of background reading including looking at recent developments in the news.

Hypothetical questions will often be asked to check out how you would react in a given situation.

During the interview try not to

- Criticise previous employers.
- Make negative comments.
- Lie.
- Make jokes, flippant remarks or appear not be taking the interview seriously.
- Overdo perfume or aftershave.
- Put on an act – it will show.
- Fidget or display other signs of nervousness.

You will be notified of the outcome of the interview via email, so please keep checking your inbox regularly. The interviewers will have given you an indication of when you will be likely to hear.

If you don't get the job then try not to feel too disheartened, ask the interviewers to provide you with areas for improvement which you can work on for your next interview. Take steps to fill any knowledge gaps and work on your interview technique with a friend or relative.

Compliments/Complaints and Suggestions

If you have any comments about our recruitment processes, please let us know. You can tell us if we are getting it right, or if we could improve the way we work. If you have a complaint about any stage of our recruitment process, please let us know by emailing bhhumanresources@berneslaihomes.co.uk.



Email: **bhhumanresources@berneslaihomes.co.uk**
Tel: **01226 772709**

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