

Step 1:

Read through the job description and person specification. Think carefully about how, and where, you have gained your knowledge, skills and experience. Was it through:

Previous paid employment
Community or voluntary work
Hobbies or leisure activities
College/university

School projects
domestic/caring responsibilities
training courses

Step 2:

Copy and paste the criteria outlined in the person specification into a word processing document first and then use these points as heading to your answers.

Step 3:

Show us how you meet each point of the person specification by providing practical examples of real life situations of when and how you have used the specific skill, knowledge or experience we are asking for. It is not sufficient to just repeat what the person specification states. Try to make your examples current and relevant to the role. You might find it helpful to use the STAR model when writing your responses.

Situation - briefly set the context for the activity you are describing and make it relevant to the job role

Task - what you were required to do

Action - explain what you actually did, how and when you did it; the process used; the rationale for the choices you took and the key things that you did to deal with the situation

Result - what were the outcomes of your actions, and what was the difference it made

If there are several requirements specified for one criterion statement, make sure you have addressed all of those in your response under that heading. Use of sub-headings can make it easier for the recruiting manager to read your submission.

If similar requirements appear on more than one criterion statement on the person specification, you must demonstrate how you meet them, even if this means repeating some of the information you have already given under a different point.

Over the page are some examples for reference

Criteria for an Administrative Assistant	Wrong ✗	Right ✓
"Experience of communicating with staff at all levels"	I am a good communicator Or I have good communication skills and relate well with others.	I have worked in my current job for 2 years and deal with written and telephone enquiries from managers, finance assistance (working in other departments) and suppliers. I also deal with petty cash and process claims or staff within my section. I therefore deal with a range of people on a daily basis. I worked for 3 years in a small solicitors practice and dealt with written and telephone enquires from clients and other solicitors.
Criteria for a gardener	Wrong ✗	Right ✓
"Able to use hand tools and equipment, and powered hand tools"	I enjoy gardening and am used to using gardening tools.	Although I have no work experience in a horticulture role, I am a keen gardener and have an allotment where I grow vegetables, as well as maintaining my garden at home. I have a good knowledge of a variety of flowers and plants. I use hand tools such as trowels, shovels, hoes, forks and use an electric lawn mower. I also enjoy DIY and have used power tools such as electric drills, sanders etc. for at least 6 years.

Step 4:

Check that you have answered every point on the person specification and that your responses are clear, concise and to the point. Try to keep your statement to under 3500 words (or approximately five A4 pages)