# Sutton College ColourGuidance Notes

# for Applicants

*Thank you for your interest in this advertised vacancy with the College.*

The Application Form contains two parts for you to complete and return to us, one of which is an equal opportunities monitoring form which will be separated from the application on arrival and used for monitoring purposes only.

These notes will help you complete the application form as effectively as possible, ensuring that your application is treated fairly.

***General points to remember***

1. If you want to apply for more than one position, please submit a separate application form for each job.
2. The form may be **typed or hand-written** but in the latter case do make sure that it is neat, clear and legible (printed in block capitals) and that you use **black ink.**
3. Clearly identify the post for which you are applying – including any reference code.
4. You can prepare your “Statement of Suitability” in a text document and attach this to the application. However, if submitting electronically please ensure that the attachment is in a format that can be opened by MS Word or Adobe PDF – e.g. .doc or .rtf or .pdf – and please “zip” any large files.
5. Use extra sheets if you need to, but please remember to indicate this on the *Declaration* page and attach them securely.

*If you need this guidance in another format, e.g. Braille, large print, tape, pictogram version please contact the DIS Team.*

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| **Please read the following before completing your forms THE APPLICATION “PACK”** | |
| ***Read the person specification and job description*** | Together with the application form and these notes, you should have received a job description and person specification for the post you are applying for. When recruiting new employees, the College will issue a “Job description” - this tells you the main responsibilities of the job and a “Person specification” - this important document explains what we are looking for. It sets out the knowledge, experience, skills, abilities, personal qualities, qualifications and additional requirements that you will need to do the job.  **The Person Specification has "criteria" which are used to determine the most suitable candidate(s). "Essential" criteria are those which you must have to carry out the responsibilities of the job. "Desirable" criteria may also be included. These are extra requirements which may be considered if we receive a large number of applicants who meet the "essential" criteria.**  By assessing the information given on the application form against the criteria on the person specification, we decide whom to invite to the next stage of the selection process. |
| ***Note the closing date and return address*** | The closing date and return address can be found on the advertisement. You should note the date by which your form must be returned to us – **applications received after the published closing date will not be considered**, but we do accept faxed and e-mailed applications. |

**COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION FORM**

Sutton College and Sutton Council are under a duty to protect the public funds they administer, and if you are employed by Sutton College, we may use the information you have provided on your application form within this authority for the prevention and detection of fraud. We may also share this information with other bodies administering public funds solely for those purposes.

The application form provides the key information which allows the selection panel to make an informed decision regarding your application. Your application form will be used in deciding whether you will be short-listed and called for an interview. This applies equally to internal candidates. **Please therefore complete the form accurately and clearly, completing all sections and please do not write ‘see attached CV’ in any section.**

When we read your application form we look for evidence to show that you have the skills required for the job as outlined in the **Person Specification**. We provide a person specification for each role. This is a list of the skills, knowledge, experience or qualifications, which the job needs. Your responses to these are a key factor we consider when deciding who to short-list. It is important that you give us enough detail, and examples of what you have done, to show that you do have these skills. Please give all the information that you think we may need, as we cannot guess or assume anything about you. Take time over this and include all the relevant information. You may wish to photocopy the application form to practice on first and then complete the original or you may find it useful to make a rough draft first.

Check through the draft to make sure that it is clear and that it covers all the criteria before you complete the actual form. You may find it useful to keep a copy of your form. It is acceptable for someone to complete the application form on your behalf (for example if your disability means that you cannot do it yourself), but you will need to give them the correct information to write down, sign the declaration and inform us that this is the case. If any of the questions are not relevant to your experience, or you cannot answer any of them for any reason, either write “n/a” or give a short explanation. A missing answer will not disqualify you from the process.

**You are advised to download and read the Job Description and Person Specification relevant to the role before completing the application form.**

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| ***Part 1*** | Clearly identify the role you have applied for and your availability if the role is part-time.  Missing information here can lead to a delay in processing your application. |
| ***Part 2*** | Complete all of the details asked for.  If you have been known by many more names, please use another sheet if you need to. |
| ***Part 4*** | Please provide details of any professional qualifications and membership of professional institutes that you hold (including the IfL referred to above) – e.g.  **CIPD, Affiliate Member, Number ABC123, July 2009** | |
| ***Part 5*** | Make it quite clear what your present post is, when you worked there, and who your employer is. | |

Your work history may include periods of unpaid and voluntary work as well as paid employment. For example you may include time as a carer for one of your family, or being a voluntary helper in a school.

**Use another sheet if you need extra space.**

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| ***Part 6***  ***&***  ***Part 7*** | It is important to offer a continuous record of employment, or an explanation of any gaps.  Please list all previous employers you have had, from when you started working until now (whether or not you consider it relevant to the post). If you have not worked before, for instance you are just leaving school; write this clearly in the box.  **We need you to provide us with your complete employment history, and any gaps of should be explained** – for example, caring responsibilities or travel.  Use another sheet if you need to. |

We reserve the right to approach any of your previous employers to confirm the information you have given and to obtain references before confirmation of an appointment.

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| ***Part 8*** | We ask for references to cover a full five year history, which may include time spent at school/further education. We will always take references from your current or most recent employer. Please provide the name and email address of the person who is authorised to give the reference**.** *Where your current employer has known you for less than one year please provide a third referee on a separate sheet.*  Please also give the name and address of another person willing to act as a referee. This could be another employer or someone able to write a reference in support of your application. **Suitable referees are people who have had direct, recent experience of the work of the applicant and who are in responsible positions**. Referees must be able to comment on your suitability for the post.  For each referee, please say how you know the person. For example, is the person your manager, or were they your manager in a previous job? Please do not give close friends or family members as referees. Personal references (e.g. from neighbours or social acquaintances) are rarely helpful to the recruitment process.   * If you were employed by an agency during that time we need to know the agency details and the companies that you were placed at. * If you are a school or college leaver, you should give your head teacher’s details. * If you have been self-employed you could give the name and e-mail address of an official (such as an accountant) who can vouch for the period when you were self employed and the information you have provided. * If you have been claiming benefits in the past five years we may contact the Benefits Office to verify this if you are successful. |

**TOP TIP –**

*Choose referees who know you well enough to comment on your skills for the job you are applying for. It is always advisable to make sure that your referees know you have used their names you have used their names before we contact them to obtain the references. Make sure that the people you choose are willing to act as referees before you give us their details.*

If you cannot provide suitable references, please contact the DIS team.

*We do not use references as part of selection itself. We approach your referees to confirm what you have told us. For example, if you tell us that you have worked in your present job for three years as a care assistant, we would expect your referees to tell us the same.*

***Please note that the College reserves the right to request references from all previous employers you have had.***

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| ***Part 9*** | We do not exclude people who are related to councillors, staff, or governors, but if you are related to someone we will make sure they do not take part in the selection for this post.  If we find out after appointing you that you are related to someone who interviewed you we may dismiss you. **‘Related’ includes cohabiting with someone.** |
| ***Part 10*** | This is your opportunity to tell us ***why you are suitable for the job*.**  Read the job description and person specification thoroughly so that you are familiar with the duties of the post and the skills, abilities etc. required to perform the duties effectively. You may find it helpful to deal with each point in turn. This will ensure that you structure your supporting statement coherently. Make sure you relate your skills and experience to each short-listing criterion.  **Give specific examples of what you have done which prove your ability.** If the person specification says ‘Able to organise self and others to complete projects within deadlines’ you must do more than say: ‘I am an organised person and can work to deadlines’.  Give an example by describing something that you have done which shows your organisational skills. **Here is an example: ‘I organised a fund-raising event for the local playgroup within six months and with a group of 5 helpers’.**  We don’t always expect you to have formal experience. If you have been out of work for a long time, or have never been in work, you may have acquired relevant skills and experience from being involved in community or voluntary work, through school or college activities, or by running your home.  **The people reading your application cannot assume that because you have experience you also have the ability to carry out a task.** You may have experience of managing staff for example but we need to know how you did this. You need to tell us how you managed performance and how you motivated you staff, for example.  *Again, please use another sheet if you need to but you must attach these securely to the application form.* |
| ***Part 11*** | The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is a non-departmental public body of the Home Office. It enables organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, especially that involve children or vulnerable adults, and provides wider access to criminal record information through its disclosure service for England and Wales. **This service enables organisations to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, especially that involving children or vulnerable adults.** You can get more information at [www.gov.uk/dbs](http://www.gov.uk/dbs)  **It is illegal for anyone barred by the DBS to work, or apply to work with the sector (children or adults) from which they are barred.** It is also illegal for an employer to knowingly employ a barred person in the sector from which they are barred.  All College roles involve some form of access to children and/or vulnerable people. They are therefore exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which means you must give us details of any criminal convictions you have had, spent or unspent.  We only carry out a DBS check if we offer you the job. In all cases we treat the information you give us as confidential, and look at it in relation to the job you have applied for before making a decision. You may be asked to provide details to the panel if selected for an interview. If you fail to disclose any criminal convictions and cautions, including those “spent”, it could result in withdrawal of the job offer, dismissal or disciplinary action by the Authority. Our borough’s DBS & Rehabilitation of Offenders Policy is available from our website or in College offices upon request. |
| ***Part 12*** | If you are unsure about your status regarding eligibility to work in the UK then you should contact the Home Office.  Read through your completed form carefully, checking for errors or omissions.  **You must read and sign the declaration.** If someone has completed the form on your behalf, you must still sign the declaration. A false declaration or omission in support of your application will disqualify you from appointment and, if you are appointed, this may lead to disciplinary action against you.  Don’t forget to tell us if you have attached any additional sheets to your form (not including the Equal Opportunities monitoring form). |

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**DATA PROTECTION**

The information on this form will form part of your contract of employment if you are successful and is collected under the lawful basis of processing contracts and will be used for recruitment and other HR, line management or statutory procedures in line with our data protection policy which can be viewed here: <https://www.suttoncollege.ac.uk/college/missions-policies/>

**RIGHT TO WORK**

Under the Asylum & Immigration Act 1996, you will be required to provide proof of your eligibility to work in the UK at interview. We always need to see original documents.

We will not appoint you until we have seen evidence – usually your national insurance number or a current work permit – that you are eligible to work in this country. You may have a permit to work in the UK. If there are any restrictions on how long you are entitled to work, please make sure you tell us when you apply for the job. This will not necessarily be a bar to your employment with us, but we must know in advance.

**ABOUT THE LONDON BOROUGH OF SUTTON**

Sutton is known as the ‘greener and cleaner borough’ – and for good reason. We are a London borough on the edge of Surrey and our southern boundaries border open fields and the North Downs. With over 1000 acres of open green spaces and many parks and cycle trails we offer the charm and peace of the country and modern, urban life.

Our community benefits from a vibrant economy and a quality of life that has attracted many major employers. Unemployment is low with jobs locally mainly in the service area, professional, light industrial and retail sectors. The borough has a substantial population of commuters. Echoes of our historic past are to be found everywhere, from fascinating old buildings such as Carew Manor in Beddington to the Arts & Craft splendour of Little Holland House in Carshalton.

Sutton, facing the challenges of all London boroughs, has led the way in creating a sustainable future for its residents with an excellent record on recycling. At Sutton we want to encourage full participation in the community and, as our vision states: build a community in which all can take part and all can take pride.

**ABOUT OUR RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

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| ***Short-listing stage*** | Once an advert has closed, all application forms received will go through the short-listing process. **The information you provided in your Statement of Suitability will be assessed against the relevant items on the Person Specification for the post.** The candidate(s) with the highest scores will be invited for interview. At least two members of the interview panel will be involved in creating the short-list.  Due to the high cost of postage, we are unable to acknowledge unsuccessful applications by post. If you provide an email address we will endeavour to let you know if you are unsuccessful. If you do not hear from us within four weeks of the closing date, please assume you have not been short-listed on this occasion. **Feedback to applicants who are not successful can be provided upon request.** However, during peak recruitment times, there may be a delay in panel members getting back to you. |
| ***Interview stage*** | Candidates who are selected will be contacted and invited to attend an interview. The College uses several selection methods to assess whether people meet the job criteria. We may ask you to take an ability test, do a presentation or other work related exercise. We will tell you before the interview what methods we are using for this post. **At the interview we will ask you questions related to the person specification.** |
| ***Offer stage*** | After interviews have taken place the successful candidate will be offered the post verbally and this will be confirmed in writing. This initial, conditional, offer will be subject to clearances (see below). **The other candidates will be informed of the outcome of their interview by email.** Feedback is available to applicants who are not successful upon request.  Recruitment and selection documentation relating to unsuccessful applicants will be kept on file for 6 months and then destroyed in accordance with the College data protection policy. |

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| If we offer you a job, it will be subject to; | | * **The receipt of written references which are satisfactory to the appointing officers** (if your references do not confirm what you have told us we will want to discuss this with you); * **The receipt of police clearance** (an enhanced DBS disclosure); * **The Council’s Medical Adviser certifying that you are medically fit for employment** (via completion of a confidential online health questionnaire. Full compliance with the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 is adhered to. Applicants may be asked to undertake a full medical examination with the Occupational Health service as a result of the information contained on the questionnaire. Any unsatisfactory medical outcome will be discussed with the medical advisor, the line manager and the individual prior to any decision regarding employment being taken); * **The verification of qualifications** specified as required for the post; * **Your eligibility to work in this country**; and * Satisfactory completion of a **probationary period**. |
| **Complaints** | We want to ensure quality of opportunity in our recruitment and selection. If you think that you have been discriminated against during the selection process because of your race, gender, caring responsibilities, disability, gender re-assignment, age, social class, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity leave and religion or belief you may complain and we will look into your complaint.  You must phone the HR Specialist within 72 hours of being rejected after an interview. **You must explain why you want to complain. You must also put your complaint into writing.** The HR Specialist or his/her representative may want to talk to you and later will confirm the outcome of the investigation | |

**OTHER INFORMATION**

It is the aim of the College that all applicants are given a fair and equal opportunity. Underpinning this process is the commitment of the College to its legal duty to safeguard the welfare of vulnerable adults, young people and children by adopting safer recruitment practices.

We will not judge you on your writing ability or your handwriting. If these skills are necessary for the job we will assess them separately.

You may have already prepared a CV and want to send that instead or answering the statement of suitability. You can send it, but you **must also complete the statement of suitability as it is unlikely the short-listing panel will be able to find enough evidence in a CV alone.**

**THE COMPLETED APPLICATION**

When completed, please read through your application carefully, checking for errors or omissions. Make sure you have checked the quoted closing date, to ensure that your application is sent to the College in plenty of time. **Late forms will not be accepted.** If you are sending in your application forms by post please ensure you include any additional sheets and that the correct postage is paid - as underpaid items are often delayed.

Please return your completed application form, together with any other relevant information, to the address given at the bottom of these notes. **If you are sending in your application form by email please check that you have addressed the email correctly and pressed the SEND button.** The [jobs@suttoncollege.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@suttoncollege.ac.uk) email address will send you an acknowledgment email. This means that your submission was successful. Please check your sent email if you do not receive this acknowledgment.

*Applications received after the published closing date will not be considered.*

**COMPLETING YOUR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING FORM**

Equality and diversity are central to the work of the College. This means that we treat people with dignity and respect, valuing the diversity of all. We also promote equality of opportunity and diversity by recognising and valuing the differences and individual contribution that people make and by creating an inclusive environment in which everyone can work. We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from all sections of the community.

We regularly check our recruitment and selection to help us ensure that our policies are being carried out. In order to help to help us do this we ask you details about your gender, ethnic origin, sexuality etc. and whether you have a disability. To see our policies surrounding equal opportunities, please visit our website – [www.suttoncollege.ac.uk](http://www.suttoncollege.ac.uk)

Any information provided on this Form is treated as ‘sensitive’ data. This form will **not** be used in the selection process itself and the selection panel does not see this section of your form. You cannot be identified after we have collected our statistics.

**DISABILITY**

If you have a disability we will offer you an interview as long as you meet the essential requirements of the job. For this reason we do tell the selection panel if any applicants are disabled.

The Equality Act 2010, states that a person has a disability if:

* they have a physical or mental impairment
* the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

* 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial
* 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions)
* 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping

If you have a disability which prevents you from meeting any of the criteria, tell us about this in your application. Please tell us what we could do to help you meet the criteria.

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|  | **Data & Information Services (DIS) Department** |
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| Sutton | |
| SM1 1EA | |
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