



Application Support Pack

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CONTENTS

1	Background to MLA North West	3
2	Conditions of Service	3
3	Achieving Success with Your Application	4
3.1	The Job Description	4
3.2	The Person Specification	5
3.3	The Application Form	5
3.3.1	Personal details	5
3.3.2	Employment	5
3.3.3	Education	5
3.3.4	Any other training and/or qualifications	6
3.3.5	Other relevant information and experience	6
3.3.6	References	6
3.3.7	Final preparations	6
3.3.8	Monitoring fairness in employment	6

1 Background to MLA North West

MLA North West is the regional strategic development agency for the museums, libraries and archives sector in the North West of England. We share the vision that museums, libraries and archives connect people to knowledge and information, creativity and inspiration. We aim to maximise the contribution of museums, libraries and archives to the North West region, and its distinctive cultural, social, educational and economic life and identity.

MLA North West is constituted as a charity (number 511412) and a non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee (number 1554226). We are one of a network of nine regional agencies funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport via the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council ("MLA").

Day-to-day management of MLA North West is the responsibility of the Chief Executive and other senior management working within a budgetary and policy framework determined by a Board of Management. The Board of Management comprises 11 trustees drawn equally from the museums, libraries and archives domains and other trustees recruited by open advertisement.

MLA North West is working towards achieving Investors in People status.

2 Conditions of Service

If your application is successful your appointment will be subject to:

- (a) the Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (Green Book), local collective agreements reached with the Trade Unions as recognised by MLA North West and the Supplemental Conditions of Service as determined by MLA North West;
- (b) the Standing Orders of MLA North West and any other regulations MLA North West may make which are consistent with (a) above and;
- (c) medical fitness for the post.

In the case of new entrants to MLA North West the appointment will be subject to the satisfactory completion of 6 months' probationary service.

The normal working week is 36¼ hours (pro rata for part-time posts) and your normal working arrangements will have been set out in the job description.

In addition to 8 public holidays, the basic leave entitlement (including annual, extra statutory and concessionary) is 26 days (pro rata for part-time posts) which is increased by 5 days after 5 years' service with the organisation.

The person appointed will be required to devote the whole of his/her time to the duties of the post and to hand over to MLA North West any fees or other monies received in connection with the appointment.

The periods of notice which you are entitled to receive from MLA North West are:

Period of Continuous Employment	Minimum Notice
4 weeks or more but less than 2 years	1 week
2 years or more but less than 12 years	1 week for each year of continuous employment
12 years or more	12 weeks

The minimum period of notice you are required to give MLA North West to terminate your employment is one pay period to the next.

A copy of MLA North West's grievance and disciplinary procedure is available.

MLA North West is an admitted body to the Local Government Pension Scheme. In the absence of any expressed wish to the contrary all employees are placed into the scheme. Non-contributing employees may elect to join the scheme at any time during their employment.

The working base of the post will have been indicated on the job description but may be at such other location as the Board of Management may require.

A car user allowance is payable and this will be appropriate to the post.

MLA North West is an equal opportunities employer and a copy of our policy and code of practice is available.

MLA North West operates a no smoking policy.

3 Achieving Success with Your Application

Your application is your first point of contact with MLA North West. However suitable you are, if your application is not well presented you will not have the opportunity to prove it. In the face of fierce competition for limited vacancies, it is essential that you market yourself well. Your application gives you the chance to do this. It should be presented in such a way that we will choose to interview you rather than another person with very similar qualifications and experience.

When you express an interest in a job with MLA North West you are provided with the following information:

- Job Description and Person Specification
- Application Form

3.1 The Job Description

All posts at MLA North West have a job description which outlines the core duties involved in the post.

3.2 The Person Specification

MLA North West's application process involves a person specification which is a list of skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications needed to do a particular job. There are two distinct stages to the person specification. The first stage is the list of the minimum **essential** requirements needed to do the job. The second stage is a list of **desirable** requirements which, whilst not absolutely essential, would be advantageous in carrying out the duties of the post. The desirable requirements are used to shortlist if there are a large number of applicants who have met the first stage. It is important, therefore, that you show how you have met each aspect of the person specification. Remember that your skills, knowledge and experience do not have to come from paid work.

The person specification also indicates the method that the short listing panel will use to assess whether you have the skills, knowledge, experience or qualifications to do the job. The most common methods of assessment are application form and interview, but you may see others. If you are unsure what any of the methods mean you are welcome to contact us.

3.3 The Application Form

Read the form through first so that you put concise information in the most appropriate sections. It is advisable to produce a rough draft of your application prior to transferring it to the actual form. When completing the form you should follow instructions and avoid poor presentation, poor spelling, illegible handwriting and unanswered questions (write "none" or "not applicable" where you have no information to provide). Ensure that by the end of the form you have tackled each point on the person specification, from the beginning, giving clear examples of how you meet each of them.

3.3.1 Personal details

We ask for these basic details so that we can easily contact you. If we need to telephone you at your current place of work, this will be done with the utmost discretion.

3.3.2 Employment

When we ask about employment we are equally interested in voluntary work and work experience, either paid or unpaid. When completing the employment sections please ensure that the dates, job titles, and employers' names are correct. You should list your previous employers in order, starting with the most recent. You should also account for any breaks in employment *eg* as a result of returning to study, travel, unemployment *etc*. We may use this information to assess whether you meet the experience requirement for the vacancy.

3.3.3 Education

List all formal and informal qualifications, including any for which you are awaiting results. We may use this information to assess whether you have the required qualifications for the vacancy. Please note you may be required to produce evidence of your qualifications.

3.3.4 Any other training and/or qualifications

List any relevant training and development activities you have undertaken *eg* customer care, time management *etc.*

3.3.5 Other relevant information and experience

This section is your chance to expand on your previous information, demonstrating to us why you are a suitable candidate. Refer to the person specification and try to illustrate your skills, experience *etc* through examples of your achievements. Remember, it is not how much you write that is important but the quality of information you provide.

3.3.6 References

When choosing your referees you should ensure that they are people who know about your skills and capabilities. One of these should be your present or most recent employer, or a college tutor if you have just left education. If you are unable to provide "employer" referees you may choose someone who knows you in a personal capacity and who can tell us about your character, honesty *etc.* Personal referees should not be related to you and you should state how you know this person *eg* neighbour, priest, family friend.

3.3.7 Final preparations

Once you are happy that all the sections of the application form have been completed, sign it, date it, take a photocopy for yourself, and return it before the closing date. Do not send us your CV, pre-written references or testimonials as standardised details of this type are not acceptable.

3.3.8 Monitoring fairness in employment

No employee or prospective employee will be treated less favourably on the grounds, of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, trade union activity, age (up to 65) or religious or political beliefs. We request all applicants to assist us in monitoring the effectiveness of the above by completing the monitoring section, which will not be seen by those responsible for drawing up the short list for interview.