GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS

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Contents

1. Introduction

Libraries NI operates an online recruitment process and in order to apply for a job with Libraries NI please visit Libraries NI website and select 'Job Opportunities'. Applicants must then click on the Login/Register navigation link at the top of the page and complete the registration process.

Libraries NI online recruitment site is secure. To view Libraries NI's privacy statement visit www.librariesni.org.uk or contact Human Resources for a copy via the 'contact careers' section on the website or by email to: HRrecruit@librariesni.org.uk

Any applicants who are experiencing difficulties completing their registration, personal profile and/or application, or who have any queries regarding the recruitment process, should contact Human Resources via the 'contact careers' section on the website or by email to: HRrecruit@librariesni.org.uk

2. Register

To register to apply for vacancies go to: Libraries NI Website and select 'Job Opportunities'.

In order to complete your registration you will need the following:

- An email address – correspondence is by email and it will also be your username
- Current Libraries NI employees will require their employee number. [1]

Select the **Login/Register** navigation link at the top of the page and follow the steps displayed on screen. Applicants have the option to register by completing the required information manually or by using their Facebook, Gmail or LinkedIn accounts. Fields marked with an asterisk* are mandatory, if you don't complete the field you won't be able to continue with your registration.

Once all the required fields are complete select 'register'.

3. Creating your Personal Profile

Once you have completed your registration please ensure that you complete the following sections of your Personal Profile:
- Personal
- My History
- Equal Opportunities
- Declaration

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[1] *If you do not know your employee number you can find it on your payslip or contact LNIHRQueries@librariesni.org.uk / tel: 028 3839 9466.

Information provided in the *Personal, My History* and *Declaration* sections of your personal profile will be available to the selection panel for any vacancy you apply for and will form part of your application

You can edit or update your information by selecting the relevant section in your personal profile.

3.1 Personal

This includes your name, address and contact details.

3.1.1 Other Details

Libraries NI are an Equal Opportunities Employer and welcomes applications from people with disabilities. Although you do not need to declare the nature of your disability, if you have a disability, please provide any relevant information and any requirements you may have so that we can process your application fairly and make any reasonable adjustments/arrangements for you to attend interview.

Eligibility to work in the UK - Applicants should ensure that they are free to remain in and take up employment in the United Kingdom. Successful candidates will be required to provide supporting documentation. Details of acceptable documentation are available from Human Resources or at: www.nidirect.gov.uk

Safeguarding - Posts involving work in locations across Libraries NI is subject to the provisions of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007. If a post is deemed to involve regulated activity under this legislation, Libraries NI will seek disclosure information for positions as it deems relevant. Libraries NI comply with the AccessNI Code of Practice regarding the handling, use, storage etc. of Disclosure of Information. Enhanced checks, including the Disclosure and Barring Service, will be required where the applicant will work in a role providing services to or having close and regular supervision of children and/or adults at risk. Applicants requiring further information on this should refer to AccessNI's website www.accessni.gov.uk

Applicants are required to declare if they have a criminal record and they must read Libraries NI policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders. The policy is available by clicking on the link click here.

Some vacancies may require applicants to have a form of transport to meet the needs of the service.

3.1.2 Preferences

Applicants have the option to receive job alerts and set job alert preferences. If you already completed this information as part of the registration process, you do not need to do so again.

3.2 My History

Applicants should complete the following details:

3.2.1 Current Employment

Please provide information about your current employment

N.B if you are currently unemployed please put 'not applicable' in the box marked 'current employer'.

3.2.2 Education

To provide details of your educational qualifications, use the *'Add'* button.

Complete the information in the pop up box as shown in the example below:

Please complete the following details

Subject/Course Studied:	English
Level of Qualification e.g. GCSE:	GCSE
Result/Grade:	C

Cancel   Save

When you have entered the details click 'save' and repeat this process for each qualification held.

3.2.3 Professional Qualifications

If applicable provide details of any professional qualifications you hold using the 'Add' button and following the same process as above.

3.2.4 Employment History

To provide details of your employment history use the 'Add' button and complete the information in the pop up box (fields marked with an asterisk* are mandatory):

Please start with your present or most recent employment first.

You must repeat this process for each position you have held to complete your employment history.

3.2.5 References (new employees only)

You are asked to provide contact details of two persons (referees) to whom reference may be made regarding your suitability for appointment. At least one of these must be your present or most recent employer, normally your line manager, who can comment on your suitability to work with children, adults at risk (if applicable) and/or your professional ability.

Referees cannot be members of the selection panel of the post you are applying for, or members of your family. If this case arises then Human Resources will contact you and ask you to provide another referee. Prior consent of the referees must be obtained.

Do not submit testimonials with your application as this may constitute canvassing.

3.3   Equal Opportunities

Libraries NI is an Equal Opportunities Employer. We aim to provide equality of opportunity to all persons regardless of their religious belief; political opinion; sex; race; age; sexual orientation; or, whether they are married or are in a civil partnership; or, whether they are disabled; or whether they have undergone, are undergoing or intend to undergo gender reassignment.

Libraries NI do not discriminate against our job applicants or employees on any of the grounds listed above. We aim to select the best person for the job and all recruitment decisions will be made objectively. You are required to answer the questionnaire, however there are options available if you chose not to disclose some or all of the information being asked. You will not suffer any penalty if you choose not to do so.

Nevertheless, we encourage you to answer the questions as this enables Libraries NI to demonstrate our commitment to promoting equality of opportunity in employment and in order to comply with our duties under the Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Your identity will be kept anonymous and your answers will be treated with the strictest confidence. For further information on Libraries NI Privacy Statement please click on the link provided or visit www.librariesni.org.uk

Please save your work when you reach the bottom of the page and then select 'Continue'.

3.4   Declaration

By clicking submit you are declaring that the information you have provided is correct and that any false or misleading information, if proved, may result in your application not being progressed or, if recommended for appointment or appointed, dismissal from the service of Libraries NI.

The information in your personal profile will form part of your application and is required by Libraries NI to process your application and form the basis of your employment record, if appointed. Information will be processed in compliance with Data Protection Legislation. Your submission of the information is deemed to be an authorisation by you to allow Libraries NI to process and retain the information for the purpose(s) stated.

Your Personal Profile is now complete. You may now apply for any vacancies that interest you with Libraries NI.

4.0 Applying for a Vacancy

You can view current vacancies in the ALL VACANCIES section of the Libraries NI website. If you have indicated that you wish to be notified of vacancies that may be of interest to you when completing the Job Alerts section of the registration process, these will appear when you are logged in My Profile.

4.1 Vacancy Information

Please ensure you select the 'More Info' navigation link to view the information relating to the vacancy. This includes job description details, some terms & conditions and personnel specification which detail the essential and desirable criteria as applicable for eligibility to apply for the post.

4.2 Completing the Vacancy Application Form

After having read the 'More Info' relating to the vacancy, and you wish to proceed to apply for the vacancy, click on the 'apply' button to open the application. Please ensure you answer all questions.

Please note when each question loads you will have 60 minutes to complete your response for that criterion before your session will timeout and the data you had entered will be lost. Each time you click "Next" to continue through your application to the next criterion your progress will be saved. You can return to your application at any time before the closing date to make amendments to your application.

To avoid the session timing out and data being lost, you may wish to pre-prepare your answers outside of the online process e.g. on a word document. Once completed, you can then copy and paste your prepared response against each criterion within the online application. When you are satisfied you have fully completed the application click on submit. Please note once you have submitted your application you will not be able to make any further changes.

NB: Additional sheets and CV's will not be considered by the selection panel, unless specifically requested as part of the application.

Please note that the selection panel can only make a decision to invite you to the next stage of the selection process e.g. assessment / interviews etc., based on the information you provide in your application and how this matches the criteria in the personnel specification.

You should take the following into consideration when completing your application:

- Never assume that because a selection panel may know you, or your work, there is no need to provide detailed information in your application

- Make sure you provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate how you meet the criteria. Do not use acronyms or complex technical detail. Write for the reader who may not know your organisation or job

- Write clearly about your personal involvement in any experience you quote, use I statements e.g. "I am responsible for……", "I made the decision to……' The selection panel is interested in how you carried out a piece of work

- Examples should be concise and relevant to the criteria. It is your unique role that the selection panel is interested in, not that of your team

- In preparing your application you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:

  o **Situation** – briefly outline the situation

  o **Task –** what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve

  o **Action** – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution

  o **Result** – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

Please note the space provided for each criterion is restricted to a maximum word count. This information is displayed below the text box and updates as you type your answer to show how many words you have used.

Once you have completed your application please tick the **declaration** box. By doing this you are certifying that the information you have provided is correct.

5.0   Submitting an Application

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that the application is fully and correctly completed and that all relevant information in support of their application is included.

CV's, letters or any other supplementary material, unless specifically requested, will not be accepted in place of, or in addition to, completed applications.

Once you are satisfied you have fully completed all the questions, click '*submit*' to submit your application. You will receive an email confirming your application has been received. Fully completed applications should be submitted online by the closing date. Once submitted, your application can be viewed in the *Vacancy Applications* section of your profile.
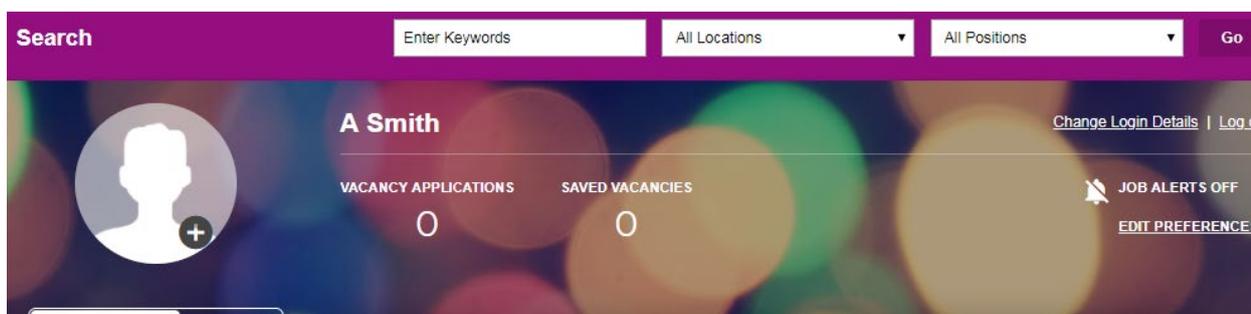
N.B. You must apply online for vacancies. Posted, emailed OR late applications will not be accepted. CVs will not be accepted.

Failure to provide sufficient information in support of an application prior to the closing date will not be considered as grounds for an appeal.

6.0   The Selection Process

Applicants are strongly advised to consider the job description and the criteria for the post carefully and ensure they have provided sufficient detail in their application to demonstrate how, and to what extent, they meet the criteria. Applicants must not simply list duties and responsibilities. Libraries NI will not make assumptions from the title of your post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.

6.1   Shortlisting

Shortlisting will be based solely on the information provided in your application. Members of the shortlisting panel are not permitted to take into consideration any information they already know about you, or make assumptions based on the information you have provided.

The essential criteria set out in the Personnel Specification are the minimum requirements for the post. Often there are a large number of applications for a post and selection panels are unable to interview all candidates who may meet the minimum essential criteria. In these circumstances the selection panel may apply desirable criteria, inviting only those who meet both the essential and the desirable criteria to interview or the first stage in the selection process. The selection panel may also agree to enhance the minimum criteria and only those applicants who meet the enhanced criteria will be called to interview or the first stage of the selection process.

To ensure that all applicants are treated fairly and consistently, the use of desirable or enhanced criteria will be agreed at shortlisting prior to examination of the applications. It is the responsibility of applicants to provide sufficient evidence in their application to demonstrate how they meet each of the essential and desirable criteria.

Applicants who have not been shortlisted for interview will be notified by email to the email address provided in their personal profile.

If a second stage of the selection process is required, only candidates shortlisted at stage one will be invited to stage two. Candidates will be notified by email of the date and time of stage two arrangements.

6.2   Selection Arrangements

Shortlisted candidates will be notified by email of the date and time they are invited to attend for interview or the first stage in the selection process. Where more than one stage of the selection process is required candidates will be notified accordingly.

External candidates will be required to bring current and valid photographic evidence of identity to assessment centres and or interview, which may include, for example, a passport, driving licence, or a national identity card. A photocopy is not acceptable. Failure to provide such evidence of identification may result in you being refused attendance at this stage.

N.B. Candidates must also provide evidence they are eligible to work in the UK before a formal offer of employment is made. See point 8.6 for further information.

Candidates must be available to attend each stage of the selection process. If you are unable to attend at the date and time specified, or wish to withdraw from the selection process at any stage, it is essential that you contact Human Resources at the earliest opportunity either by telephone 02839 399 466 or by email to: HRrecruit@librariesni.org.uk. A request for an alternative date and/or time will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and will be at the absolute discretion of Libraries NI.

6.3   Outcome of the Selection Process

All candidates (successful and unsuccessful) will be notified by email of the outcome of their interview.

6.3.1 Recommended Candidate

Selection panels can only **recommend** candidates for appointment. Before Libraries NI can consider making a formal offer of employment the recommended candidate will be required to complete satisfactorily all pre-employment checks/procedures required. These include the following:

1.   completion of a Health Declaration Form*
2.   issue of a satisfactory AccessNI certificate
3.   documentary evidence of eligibility to work in the UK
4.   receipt of **original** Birth Certificate
5.   receipt of **original** documentary evidence of qualifications required for the post**
6.   receipt of two satisfactory references***
7.   any other documentation necessary to meet the essential requirements of the post.

*based on information disclosed in the Heath Declaration Form, Libraries NI may, at its discretion, require a candidate to attend a medical examination.

**The information provided must be official original proof that you possess, at the closing date for receipt of applications for the post, all qualifications and any other required documentary evidence which you relied on to support your application.

***For posts involving regulated activity, at least one reference should be a previous or current employer able to comment on the candidate's suitability to work with children/young people in an education setting and their professional ability.

Recommended candidates should not take any action to terminate their current employment until they receive further communication from Libraries NI confirming the formal offer of appointment.

6.3.2 Reserve Candidates

All candidates who have achieved the pass mark for the suitability for appointment but have not been recommended for appointment will be placed on a reserve list. In the event that the successful candidate fails to take up the post or if a similar vacancy becomes available, Libraries NI will contact candidates in order of suitability for appointment until the position has been filled or the reserve list has been exhausted. Reserve lists will usually be held for 12 months.

7.0   General Information

7.1   Equal Opportunities

Libraries NI is an Equal Opportunities Employer (please refer to point 3.3 for more information).

7.2   Canvassing

Canvassing means contact or communication at any time in any manner (direct, indirect, oral or written, specific or general) with a member of Libraries NI who is involved in the recruitment of the post for which you are applying, which could be deemed, or perceived to be, for the purpose of advancing your application. Any applicant who is found to have knowingly approached a selection panel member for a post with a view to seeking favourable treatment will be disqualified.

7.3   AccessNI (Access Northern Ireland)

Libraries NI will undertake criminal history disclosure checks as part of a recruitment process. A pre-employment job offer will ask the recommended candidate to complete a Basic, Standard or Enhanced AccessNI check. If you are recommended for appointment you will be asked to apply online at: www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni further details will be provided at that time.

The majority of posts in Libraries NI require the post holder to participate in Regulated Activity under the provision of Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 e.g. Library Assistants, Branch Library Manager, Mobile Library Manager, Homecall Driver.

If the post is deemed to involve '*regulated activity'* Libraries NI will be required to obtain an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate from AccessNI which provides details of unfiltered* spent and unspent convictions as well as other relevant information held in police records or other law enforcement agencies.

*Access NI filters: Sometimes details of your criminal record won't appear on your disclosure certificate. This is called 'filtering'. AccessNI filters convictions and cautions for minor or certain old offences from standard and enhanced checks.

Filtering does not remove convictions for serious offences or convictions that resulted in a prison sentence.

From 1 March 2016 AccessNI applicants can access a Criminal Record Review Scheme. This will mean that an applicant can request an Independent Reviewer (IR) to review any conviction or non-court disposal information on Standard/Enhanced certificates, where they believe that disclosure was disproportionate. Information about the Independent Reviewer can be found on the back of each AccessNI certificate issued and on the NI Direct website.

Information on criminal history disclosure checks and Access NI Code of Practice can be viewed on Access NI website www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni

Libraries NI reserve the right to request the appointed candidate to apply for the required level of Access NI check after a 3 year period following appointment.

If you would like to request a copy of Access NI code of practice please contact HRRecruit@librariesni.org.uk

7.4   Rehabilitation of Offenders

The majority of Libraries NI posts are exempt from the provision of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Order 1978. Appointments to such posts will be subject to a satisfactory criminal record check. In line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978, Libraries NI will only ask about convictions which are defined as "unspent" within the terms of that Order, unless the nature of the position is such that we are entitled to ask questions about an individual's entire criminal record.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily debar you from working with Libraries NI. This will depend on the nature of the position, together with the circumstances and background of your offences or other information contained on a disclosure certificate or provided directly to us by the police.

Libraries NI Policy on the recruitment of Ex-offenders is available via a link in the 'Criminal Record' section of the personal profile.

7.5   Data Protection

Please ensure that the details given on your application are correct. The data provided by you will be processed in accordance with Data Protection Legislation.

The information you provide during the recruitment process will only be used to:

- process your application for appointment

- form the basis of a computerised record of the recruitment process and monitoring purposes

- form the basis of a manual job file with other applications used for the Recruitment and Selection process

- form the basis of a manual and computerised employment record if appointed

- to fulfil legal or regulatory requirements if necessary.

Libraries NI will not share any of the information you provide during the recruitment process with any third parties for marketing purposes or store any of your information outside of the European Economic Area.

Libraries NI will only ask for the information we need to fulfil the purposes stated above, the information you provide will be held securely and will not be retained for longer than necessary.

7.5.1 Application Stage

If you submit an application online, the information provided by you will be stored electronically by ePloy on behalf of, and accessible to, Libraries NI. A copy of the ePloy Privacy Notice can be viewed at:
https://www.eploy.co.uk/information/privacy/

7.5.2 Selection Process

The selection panel will have access to the information you provide. They will not have access to any equal opportunities information you may have provided.

Libraries NI may ask you to participate in assessment and/or to attend an interview. Information will be generated by you and by us. For example, you might complete a written test or we might take interview notes. This information is held by Libraries NI.

If you are unsuccessful following assessment/interview for the position you have applied for, Libraries NI will not retain the information for any longer than necessary. If you were not the selection panel's first choice and have been placed on a reserve list we would proactively contact you should the vacancy arise within a specified time frame. You can withdraw from the reserve list at any time by contacting HRrecruit@librariesni.org.uk

7.5.3 Recommendation and Formal Offer

If you are recommended for appointment we will ask you for information so that we can carry out pre-employment checks. You will be required to provide:

- a completed Health Declaration Form. This is to establish your fitness for the post you have been recommended for

- a satisfactory AccessNI certificate – this will verify your declaration of unspent convictions

- eligibility to work in the UK – original evidence must be provided, we will retain copies

- original Birth Certificate and original documentary evidence of qualifications, we will retain copies

- two satisfactory references. We will contact your referees, using the details you provide in your application, directly to obtain references.

If we make a final offer, we will also ask you for the following:

- bank details – to process salary payments

- emergency contact details – so we know who to contact in case you have an emergency at work

- P45 or a HMRC starter checklist - record information for PAYE.

7.5.4 Retention of Your Information

If you are successful, the information you provide during the application process will be retained by us as part of your employee file for the duration of your employment plus seven years following the end of your employment.

If you are unsuccessful at any stage of the process, the information you have provided until that point will be will be held securely and will not be retained for longer than necessary.

Information generated throughout the assessment process, such as interview notes, will be held securely and will not be retained for longer than necessary.

Equal opportunities information is retained for four years following the closure of the recruitment campaign whether you are successful or not.

To view Libraries NI's privacy statement please visit www.librariesni.org.uk

Or contact Human Resources staff for a copy via the 'contact careers' section on the website or by email to: HRrecruit@librariesni.org.uk

7.6 Eligibility to Work in the UK

Evidence of eligibility to work in the UK must be obtained for all candidates before a formal offer of employment is made, before the contract of employment is issued and before a start date is agreed.

Libraries NI are required to verify and take copies of <u>original</u> documentation. Candidates are asked to bring evidence of entitlement to work in the UK to the interview as these checks are carried out at interview stage. A list of acceptable documents to demonstrate your right to work in the UK are available at www.nidirect.gov.uk

Candidates who do not provide acceptable documentation at interview stage will be required to present acceptable documentation to a designated local library where an authorised manager will conduct the relevant checks. Human Resources should be contacted to make arrangements in advance.

***N.B.** Eligibility to Work in the UK checks may not be required for internal candidates as these will have been carried out when you took up employment with Libraries NI.*