



Exclusive Inclusion

creating a fairer world

In job adverts, employers often show what applicants must have (essential) and what they should have (desirable).

Exclusive Inclusion is an Equity, Inclusion and Diversity consultancy. The founder of Exclusive Inclusion, Sunjay Kakar, researched that the following organisations do not use desirable criteria in their recruitment.

For more information please contact sunjay@exclusiveinclusion.com
or call **07934859101**





Ambitious about Autism

Chief Executive of Ambitious about Autism

We are a disability confident organisation and we value difference. Disability Confident guidance from the Department for Work and Pensions advises organisations to consider the words they use in job applications to prevent potential barriers that may deter disabled candidates from applying. For this reason we choose not to use desirable criteria.

We assess people on what is required to do the role. This is particularly important for autistic candidates, many of whom interpret information differently, and value clear and simple language in job advertisements.

Statement from Director of National Museums, Liverpool

Our organisation is committed to understand and learn to avoid any potential breach of our equality and diversity policy and so I should be I appreciate you bringing your concerns. We've listened to your feedback and our leadership team will commit to removing desirable criteria from our person specifications and to consistently ask for relevant experience alongside qualifications. Our aim is to make these changes imminently whilst updating our internal recruitment policy.



Credit: Gareth Jones



Credit: HS2 Ltd

Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion | HS2 Ltd

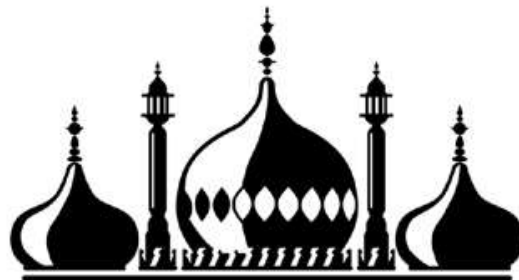
HS2 doesn't use desirable criteria because applicants are assessed against what is required for the role only. Desirable criteria tend to lean towards personality related descriptors, criteria that are not required to deliver the job effectively or are subjective in nature.

Statement from Head of HR Policy and Projects, Brighton & Hove City Council

Our person specifications should specify only those requirements that are essential to enable the post-holder to perform the job effectively.

This means that, apart from a small number of roles where there is a statutory requirement for the individual to hold a specific qualification, we make it clear that where a specific level of technical knowledge is required for the role, applicants can demonstrate this either by holding an appropriate qualification or by evidencing a comparable level of knowledge gained through experience.

We believe that this enables us to attract a wider, more diverse pool of applicants by removing unnecessary requirements for our job roles.



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**



Statement from Assistant Director, HR Services, Birmingham City Council

At Birmingham City Council, we do not use desirable criteria as good practice. Line managers draft person specifications and they are reviewed by the HR team in line with our policy, the Equality Act and other relevant legislation.

Statement from Head of Equality & Diversity, Human Resources, Nottingham City Council

We do not use desirable criteria because we believe that recruiting on the basis of ability is paramount. Desirable criteria gives more scope to sift out potentially good candidates as a result of additional requirements which are not necessarily needed to carry out the job



Hertfordshire Constabulary

We set our technical entry requirements at the minimum level so that we can attract the widest pool of applicants. The personal qualities (behavioural competencies) are a national standard that are used in many police Forces. These are written in such a way as to allow candidates, whatever their background, to evidence their experience and abilities.

In using this approach we see no requirement for desirable criteria as we can, through the stages of the selection process, test the information provided against the criteria set in the published role profile to determine if it meets the required standard. We can also take advantage of the positive action provisions of the Equality Act 2010 if the circumstances meet the required tests in order to continue in our work to achieve a more representative workforce in Hertfordshire Constabulary.



Credit: Hertfordshire Constabulary

Director of HR, Bedfordshire Police, Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Hertfordshire Constabulary

Use of desirable selection criteria is not recommended practice within Hertfordshire Constabulary. Managers are responsible for developing the content for role profiles for roles they are recruiting to or setting up, and work from a template developed by HR which does not include desirable criteria.

Statement from Director of People & Legal Services, National Trust

The National Trust no longer use “desirable” criteria in our new job role profiles and we are removing it from new job advertisements. We want our employee base to represent the nation we serve. We know that the use of “desirable” criteria can add unnecessary barriers to applicants when our principal focus is to recruit on behaviours and attitude, enabling us to recruit brilliant people to help deliver our wonderful cause.





The Inclusion, Organisational Development & Capability team, Department of Transport

The Department for Transport (DFT) strongly advise hiring departments against the use of desirable criteria in line with the Civil Service Commission Recruitment Principles 2018 and associated FAQ's and Guidance (amended February 2021).

DFT Resourcing Group work with DFT hiring managers to review desirable criteria and decide if they are either essential criteria for the advertised role or can be removed to ensure an open and fair recruitment experience for all candidates.

Freedom of Information Team, Sussex Police

The constructive challenge and subsequent changes, regarding use of 'desirable criteria' originated from feedback and discussions with yourself. This was considered by senior stakeholders, who agreed to make changes to guidance for recruiting.

The details of the process of the change and the reasons why desirable criteria is no longer used can be found below;

Surrey/Sussex Police had put an interim measure in place within our Hiring Managers Guidance which stated:

When considering what experience and skills are Essential or Desirable in a job advert or Job description, please ask yourself, is the criteria/requirement for the role really Desirable or is it Essential? If the criteria/requirement is NOT essential, then does it need to be mentioned in the advert? Putting 'Desirable' criteria in an advert, will exclude some potential applicants from applying and this reduces your access to the broadest pool of talented candidates.

A review of our job Description process for removing desirable criteria from job descriptions and adverts then became effective of the 1st April 2021.

The changes were made following a discussion with colleagues from Surrey Police and Sussex Police People Services and Diversity and Inclusion teams.



Credit: Ashley Harkness on Unsplash



Freedom of Information Officer, Surrey County Council

Surrey County Council does not use 'desirable criteria' in its job profiles. The job profiles are used to determine the grading of a post based on our job evaluation process. The essential criteria sets out the minimum qualification required to be eligible to apply for a particular post. Our aim is to attract applicants from a diverse talent pool. The job profile templates only including essential criteria were introduced in 2012.