



Guidance Notes for Applicants

Thank you for your interest in working at the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. These guidance's notes are intended to help you complete your online application form and to help you understand the recruitment process.

All advertisements for job vacancies at the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust are made available on NHS Jobs at www.jobs.nhs.uk or alternatively you can visit our Trust website at <https://www.coch.nhs.uk/working-with-us.aspx>.

When you apply for a job, you'll be redirected to our recruitment site, Trac Jobs and you will be required to sign in or create an account to apply. You'll also need to confirm that you have read and agreed to our candidate privacy note that applies for the data submitted in your application form.

1. Candidate Privacy Notice

As part of the application and recruitment process, the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust ('the Trust') collects, process, and store personal information about you. The Trust processes this information for a range of purposes relating to the recruitment process and this may include your application, any assessment, pre-employment screening and your worker permissions. Further information can be obtained from our Data Protection Officer – coch.dpo@nhs.net

2. Application Form

Application forms are 'online' and a great application form will make you stand out against other applicants therefore it's important that you complete the form in full and as accurately as possible.

Use the 'supporting information' section to include any relevant information that you have not included elsewhere on your application form. Use it as an opportunity to sell yourself and make it relevant to the role you are applying for.

We are required to collect certain details within the monitoring section of the application form. This information is used for monitoring purposes only and will not be seen by the interview panel. The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence.

3. Value-based Interviews

If your application is shortlisted, you will be invited to attend an interview. Your interview confirmation will confirm the date and time of the interview, the location, and the names of the interviewer.

At COCH our interviews include value-based questions. Values based questions help an employer find out if a candidate's values and behaviours are aligned to those of the Organisation. During your interview you'll be asked to provide real life examples of situations you've faced as part of your answers.



4. Guaranteed Interview Scheme

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disabled person is someone with a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long term' effect on their ability to normal daily activities.

The Guaranteed Interview Scheme, provides that candidates who are disabled, meet the essential criteria for the role and wish to be considered for a role, will be offered an interview.

To be considered under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, you must show that you meet the 'essential criteria' that is set out in the person specification for the role that you are applying for.

You'll also need to answer, 'yes' to the question 'according to the definition of disability do you consider yourself to have a disability' and 'do you wish to be considered under the guaranteed interview scheme'. We can make reasonable adjustments to ensure that any selection processes, including the interview are fair and equitable.

The Guaranteed Interview Scheme only guarantees an interview, it does not guarantee that you will be successful at interview and gain employment with the Trust.

5. Employment history and reference checks

When applying for a role at the Trust, you are required to outline your full employment and/ or training history. You should also explain any gaps between periods of employment and training.

If an offer of employment is made, we will seek the necessary references to validate a period of three consecutive years of continuous employment and or training immediately prior to your application being made. It's important that you provide full details of your referees on your application form, including their full name, job title, email address, landline number and address where applicable.

The number and type of reference obtained may vary, depending on whether you have held employment or have studied for a period of three consecutive years and/ or how many episodes of employment or training you may have had during this time.

Employment and/or training history will be obtained in writing (either via email or hardcopy). Emailed confirmation from employers/charity bodies or training institutions should be sent from a recognised company email address.

Character and personal references may be sought from personal acquaintances that are not related to you, and who do not hold any financial arrangements with you. Personal acquaintances may include professors, academic advisors, or someone of standing in the applicant's community. Further guidance about persons of some standing in the community can be found on the following website: <https://www.gov.uk/countersigning-passport-applications/accepted-occupations-for-countersignatories>

We must obtain satisfactory references, or your offer of employment will be withdrawn.



6. Work health assessments

A work health assessment refers to a variety of processes undertaken by us to health screen staff to assess whether you are capable and fit to undertake a particular role. Its primary purpose is to help prevent work-related illnesses, injuries and the spread of disease or infection.

After an offer of employment has been made you will be required to complete a confidential health questionnaire.

The Occupational Health Team will process your information and will ascertain whether there are any additional requirements or reasonable adjustments, that should be considered to ensure your safety and wellbeing and/or any patients you may be providing services to/or will have contact with. In some cases, you may be required to attend an appointment with the team.

All health assessments will be carried out fairly, objectively and in accordance with equal opportunities legislation and good occupational health practice.

You must have medical clearance before starting work. Any offer of employment is conditional pending the completion of a relevant health assessment.

7. Criminal record checks

If an offer of employment is made, you may be required to complete a Disclosure application form, which will be treated in strictest confidence by the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

If the post is deemed to be subject to a Criminal Records Check, the cost of the disclosure will be deducted from the successful applicants' salary over the first three months of employment.

We would recommend that all post holders who require a DBS for their role, register with the DBS Update Service. More information can be found on their website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-update-service-applicant-guide/dbs-update-service-applicant-guide>

Failure to provide accurate and truthful information is a serious matter. Where it is found that you have intentionally or recklessly provided inaccurate information or withheld information relevant to their position, this may disqualify you from appointment. It may also result in dismissal or disciplinary action and referral to the appropriate professional regulatory body.

If you have spent time overseas for a period of six months or more (whether continuously or in total) within the last five years, you will be asked to provide an overseas police check as part of your employment checks.

All information provided will be treated in strictest confidence and in line with the Trust Candidate Privacy Notice and relevant data protection legislation.

The Trust complies fully with the code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of DBS certificates and DBS certificate information. The Trust also complies fully with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage and retention and disposal of certificate information. Further guidance on the handling of DBS certificate Information can be requested from the Recruitment Team.



8. Recruitment of ex-offenders'

As an Organisation we assess applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order by using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust complies fully with the DBS code of practice [code of practice](#).

We are committed to treating all applicants fairly and undertake to not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check based on a conviction or other information revealed.

COCH is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff, or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability, or offending background.

We provide information on our position regarding the recruitment of ex-offenders to all applicants at the start of the recruitment process.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills, and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, and experience.

We ensure that all those in COCH who are involved in the recruitment process receive appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g., the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

COCH makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the DBS code of practice [code of practice](#) and makes a copy available on request.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an applicant from working for the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Trust. This will depend upon the relevance to the post and the nature and (if applicable) pattern of the offence(s).

9. Identity checks

Before you start work with us, we'll need to verify your identity. You'll be required to attend a pre-employment check appointment and you will be asked to provide a range of original documents to confirm your name, current address, and residency.

You will need to provide one of the following combinations:

- Two forms of photographic personal identification and one document confirming your current residing address

Or



- One form of photographic personal identification and two documents confirming your current residing address

If you can't genuinely provide any form of photographic personal identification, you will be asked to provide the following documentary evidence:

- Two documents confirming your current residing address
- Two forms of non-photographic personal identification and
- A passport-sized photograph of themselves.

A list of acceptable documents will be provided to you should your application be successful.

10. Professional Registration and qualification checks

We'll also verify that you have the necessary skills and qualifications for the job that you are applying for and if applicable to the role, that you are registered with the relevant professional body and that you meet the required standard of training, competency and conduct to practice safely in your chosen profession.

11. Right to work standards

A right to work check determines whether you have the legal right and permission to work in the UK. We'll complete right to work checks if you are successful before you can start work at the Trust.

If you are a non-UK national, you can confirm your right to work through the Home Office online checking portal. You'll need to share your code with us so that we can check your right to work status digitally.

In some instances, it's not possible to use the Home Office online portal to verify right to work status. Where this is the case, we'll complete a manual check.

To complete a manual check, you'll be required to provide original documents from List A or B of the acceptable documents. The Home Office has provided guidance and this can be found on their website - [Employers' right to work checklist - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

12. Leadership Framework

The Countess of Chester supports diversity and views all of its staff as having potential. We have a Talent and Succession planning strategy that supports us to have people with the right capabilities and motivations across the organisation that can help us to deliver our strategic objectives and the highest quality of care for our patients. All staff have access to career conversations if they want them.

We have a new Leadership Framework that encompasses local and national drivers that support leaders at all levels to develop the behaviours and competencies that positively impact on our culture, patient and employee experience. The framework connects the Head, Heart and Hands of leadership and supports leaders to bring out the best in themselves and in those around them.

The Framework covers 4 Domains across 4 levels of Leaders.

1. Leading with Compassion and Inclusion
2. Working together in collaboration



3. Learning and Improving
4. Delivery and Performance