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## Promotions Appeal Board and Section 59 Review Objectives

- To address all appeals and grievances within the principles of merit, equity and fairness
- To provide impartial advice and assistance on all enquiries
- To address all appeals and grievances in a timely and effective manner
- To increase awareness and acceptance of the appeals and grievance process

### Promotions Appeal Board and Section 59 Review

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# Writing a job application

## A guide for employees



Northern  
Territory  
Government

Office of the Commissioner  
for Public Employment

# Promotion Appeal Board and Review

## Why is an application important?

A job application is important for many reasons. It is the first impression a prospective employer has of you, it is the means of obtaining an interview for a vacancy and it is the framework for any interview you are granted. It is the first and most crucial step in the selection process, and one missing fact can mean the difference between obtaining an interview or not. Badly presented applications can result in a person possessing superior merit to other candidates not even being granted an interview. An ordered and well presented application is important in ensuring the selection process is as fair as possible.

## What is an application's function?

A job application has several functions. Its primary purpose is to display to a prospective employer that you are a suitable candidate for a vacancy by addressing the full selection criteria for the job. Before applying for a Public Sector vacancy, you should obtain the full job description and selection criteria from the Recruitment Section of the relevant Agency. In the Public Sector, selection is made in accordance with the merit principle, that is, having regard to your knowledge, skills, and qualifications against the selection criteria, and your potential for future development in the Public Sector. Your application is the first crucial step in showing that you possess superior merit to the other candidates, and its function is to bring you to the selection advisory panel's attention.

## What information should it contain?

There are usually three main sections - the covering letter, which expresses your desire to apply for the vacancy, a section which details your claims against the selection criteria, and your curriculum vitae (cv) or resume. The cv/resume should have at least three sections of information; personal contact details, education history, and employment history. A fourth, listing hobbies and recreational details, is optional, but may help the selection advisory panel by giving some idea of who you are as a person; this less formal information might be used to break the ice in an interview. Remember, you can give too little information in an application, and it is usually better to give more. Although the information must be relevant to the vacancy, irrelevant detail may frustrate the selection advisory panel. Your cv/resume will probably be anything between two and five pages long.

## Personal details

In this section you should include:

- Full name
- Address
- Contact telephone numbers (include mobile number if you have one)
- Current designation
- Current agency or employer

## Education details

In this section you should include:

- Details of the highest level of education attained (secondary or tertiary), with the name of the institution/s attended, and the
- Dates of attendance;
- Details of apprenticeships, training courses, etc and
- Details of qualifications.

## Employment history

In this section you should include:

- Details of your employment history, starting with your most recent job and working back.
- Each job description should include your employer's name, your dates of employment, your job title (and level if appropriate), and a summary of your duties and responsibilities. You should also include any major achievements in your most recent jobs.

## Recreation details

This section is optional, but can be useful in displaying initiative, leadership and creativity. Information should be relevant to the job and could include:

- Hobbies and interests
- Sports and clubs
- Membership of societies and positions held

## Addressing the selection criteria

This is an important part of your application. Before applying for the vacancy, you should obtain the full selection criteria from the relevant agency (an address is provided with the advertisement). The information provided in the job advertisement does not fully detail the selection criteria and is not sufficient to frame an application around.

Once a full list of the criteria is available, you should display your competence or suitability in all of them. You should provide any information necessary here to show that you are suitable for the vacancy. Stating that you can satisfy the criteria is not enough, you must provide examples of your experience and knowledge for each criterion.

Useful information could include examples of tasks undertaken in paid or voluntary employment, or undertaken for other reasons. It is suggested that this information be in its own section (separate from the letter and CV), titled 'Claims Against Selection Criteria'. If you provide insufficient information, or fail to meet all essential criteria, you are unlikely to be considered for the vacancy. Remember, you must meet all essential selection criteria to be chosen for the vacancy.

## What else should the application contain?

The application will need a covering letter explaining that you are applying for the advertised vacancy (state the vacancy and where it is

advertised) and may briefly summarise your main claims to the vacancy. The letter should also state that a curriculum vitae and your detailed claims to the vacancy are attached. The letter should be personal. Address it to an individual - if possible, find out the name of the Recruitment Officer or Chairperson of the selection advisory panel and address it to them.

It is also a good idea to include at least two referees at the end of your cv/resume; make sure you provide their full names, addresses, titles and contact numbers. In most cases family members or friends would not be suitable. Your current or most recent supervisors are preferable as referees. You should check that the people you choose are willing to be referees for you, and you should provide them with copies of the job description and selection criteria.

## What if I am applying for two or more vacancies?

If you wish to be considered for more than one vacancy in the public sector, you must send a separate application for each vacancy unless they are of the same designation and the selection criteria are identical.

## Final check

Before you send your application, you should check to make sure:

- There is a signed letter at the front of the application, outlining the vacancy being applied for, and the place where that vacancy was advertised;
- That your brief curriculum vitae/resume contains the three main sections (personal, education and employment details) and that the information is up to date and correct;
- That the selection criteria are addressed in full;
- That the application is well presented and clearly laid out;
- That the application provides all of the information relevant to the vacancy being applied for;
- That the covering letter and curriculum vitae/resume are neatly typed;
- That the application details your skills and merit for the vacancy without exaggeration or understatement;
- That the application does not present any ambiguous information to the selection panel;
- That all information presented is positive;
- That there are no spelling errors;
- That any gaps in your employment history are accounted for (e.g. breaks for study or travel); and
- That the closing date for applications (14 days after notification of the vacancy) has not passed.

It is also a good idea to ask a friend or relative to do a final check of your application.