THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA
CREATE CHANGE

Top tips for responding to selection criteria

This document has been designed to support you in effectively responding to selection criteria during the application process.

Writing responses to selection criteria can be challenging and time intensive. It is best to plan out your response and work through the drafting process in stages.

Tip 1: Read the application requirements carefully

Whenever you are applying for a role, it is vital to first make sure you closely read the application requirements in the job listing. For example, some positions may require you address the selection criteria in the cover letter, whereas other positions may require a separate selection criteria document. By uploading the required documents, it demonstrates that you have closely read the requirements and paid attention to detail.

Make sure you take note of maximum page lengths that may be specified in the job listing. If no page limits are specified, reach out to the contact that is included within the job listing and enquire for more details.

Tip 2: Identify the selection criteria

Once you understand the document requirements, it is important to identify the selection criteria. Selection criteria may incorporate technical skills and competencies (e.g. a degree in a particular discipline or knowledge of specific platforms/systems), and transferable capabilities (e.g. communication, collaboration).

Some typical examples of transferable capabilities that are often found in job listings include:

- Exceptional communication skills with the ability to build strong relationships across all organisational levels
- The ability to innovate and think creatively
- Possess a strong work ethic, solid time-management skills and the ability to meet deadlines

Tip 3: Start mapping out some potential examples to demonstrate that you meet these criteria

Once you have identified the selection criteria, the next step is to identify some examples in which you demonstrated these capabilities from a professional work experience, an extra-curricular activity, or from your studies. Try to identify a wide range of examples.

A way for you to identify some suitable examples to draw upon is to use the following self-audit table. Two example selection criteria are provided in the table, with the words bolded that you would need to address.

Selection	Example/
Demonstrated ability to prioritise tasks through **time and project management**	**Time management** Balanced part-time work, studies, and engaged in extra-curricular activities. **Project management** Collaborated on a Student-Staff Partnerships (SSP) Project where we developed a project plan and corresponding timelines. We met our project goals which was X.

Selection	Example/
Ability to work effectively in a **team** environment and **autonomously**	**Team** Part-time job at McDonald's where we work collaboratively to ensure customers receive quality service in a timely manner. **Autonomous** Opened and closed the retail store and supervised a small team of casual staff on weekend shifts.

Tip 4: Identify the best way to tell your story

There are two primary ways in which you can respond to the selection criteria:

1. **Structured**
   In the structured approach, headings are used to clearly guide the reader through your responses to each of the selection criteria. For each criterion, there would be a minimum of one paragraph (depending upon the amount of space specified in the instructions) in which you respond to the criteria.
2. **Narrative**
   Think of this like an unstructured or persuasive essay where you don't use headings but rather tell a story. In such a document, each paragraph needs to flow with sentence connectors (or connections between the paragraphs so that it has a logical flow). If you are using this approach, use bold text when you mention the selection criteria. This helps the panel to determine that you have responded to the selection criteria and makes their role in shortlisting easier.

Tip 5: Use the STAR method

When responding to the selection criteria, it is important to utilise the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) method. The STAR method is a structured and effective way to respond to selection criteria. For each of the corresponding selection criteria, structure your responses by following the STAR method. Some example questions to guide your responses are provided below:

- **Situation:** Briefly describe the context and your role
- **Task:** Where were you expected to do?
- **Action:** What did you do?
- **Result:** What was the outcome?

For further details, please contact:

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