

Application Guidance

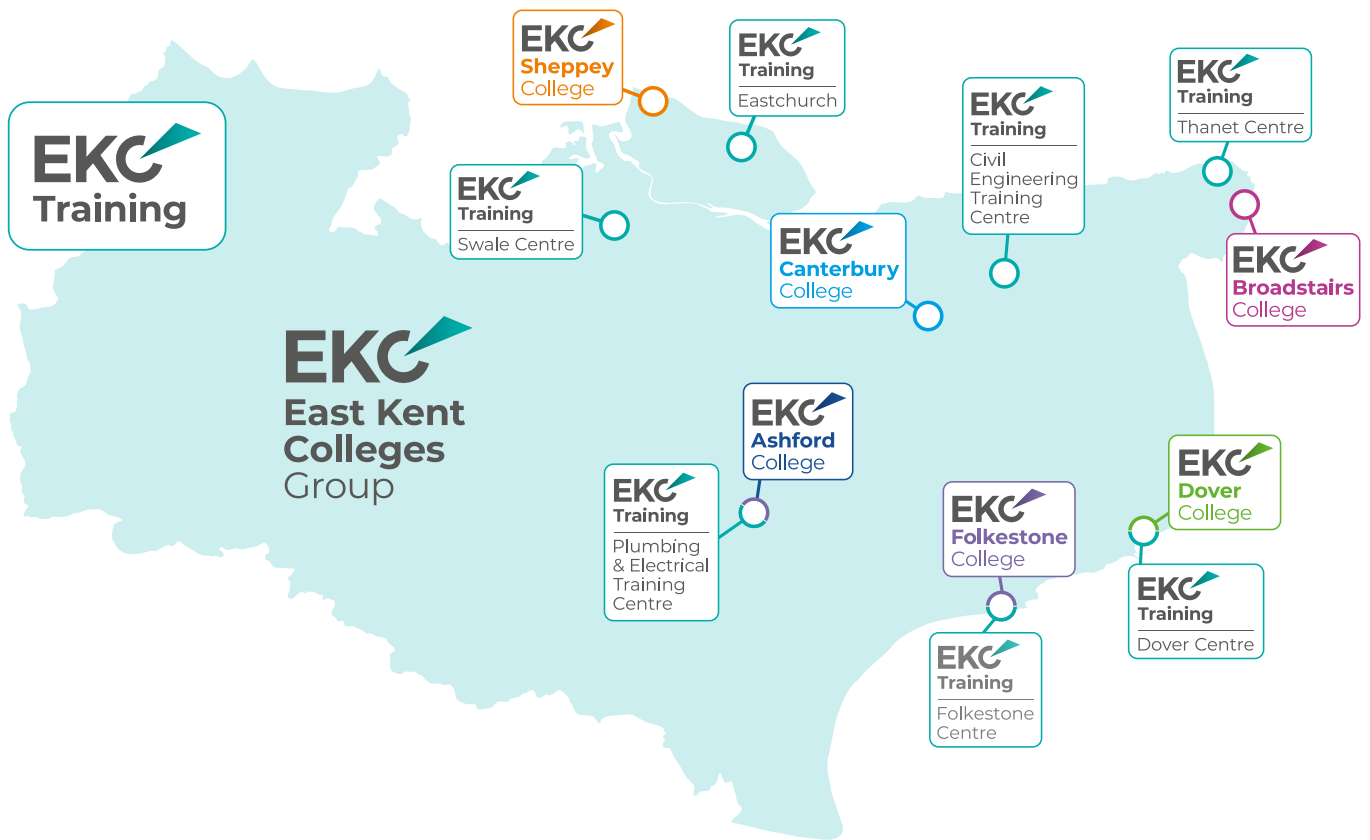


Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Terminology	2
Completing an application.....	2
Guidance on using AI when applying to EKC Group	3
Completing further applications.....	4
How to write your application statement	4
How we shortlist	5
The Interview Process	6
How do we interview and assess.....	6
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	7
Reasonable Interview Adjustments	7
Guaranteed Interview Scheme.....	8

Introduction

We're happy that you are considering the East Kent Colleges Group as a potential employer. We're committed to embedding an excellent candidate experience into our recruitment process and have created guidance for candidates to support the completion of an application with ease. Within this document, you will find answers to frequently asked questions and guidance to our process.

Our Group Mission: *Our Mission is to play a leading role for East Kent in developing the economic and social prosperity of the diverse communities we serve*

You can also access our Candidate Charter via our careers website to read about our commitment to our candidates.

Terminology

Hiring Managers – Those who are the shortlisting and interview panel chair, and overall decision makers of the hiring process.

Shortlisting – This is the process where a Hiring Manager assesses and choose who to progress to the interview and assessment stage.

DBS – DBS stands for Disclosure and Barring Service. This service checks an individual's criminal record. From this check, a certificate is provided. It is a legal requirement to gain an Enhanced DBS Certificate when working in an educational establishment where unregulated work takes place.

Blind Recruitment – We operate a recruitment process where our Hiring Managers cannot see your personal information, such as name, age and location including all protected characteristics. We also hide your CV from our Hiring Managers view to remove any potential unconscious bias.

Micro-Teach – This is a short teaching session that forms part of the interview assessment for teaching roles.

Resourcing Team – We are a group wide team who oversee the recruitment process, compliance and recruitment strategies. We are the point of contact for candidates, agencies and Hiring Managers.

Safeguarding – This is a term used regarding the protection of children from abuse and maltreatment, preventing harm to children's health and development, and ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care. To safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults is to protect their health, wellbeing and human rights. This is the responsibility of all staff in an educational establishment.

The Prevent Duty – The Prevent Duty is part of the UK government's counter-terrorism guidance. It focuses on keeping people and communities safe from the threat of terrorism by preventing them from being drawn into terrorist organisations or ideals. All staff in an educational establishment are required to be aware and trained in The Prevent Duty.

Completing an application

Our application form is assessed against the person specification for that role. The statements will be reviewed alongside your education, qualifications, skills and experience.

Should I upload a CV?

Uploading a CV is optional when registering with us. However, please note that Hiring Managers will not see your CV, as we do not accept CVs as part of our application process. The system allows you to upload a CV to help save time by automatically pulling information - such as your employment history and qualifications - into your application form.

We recommend reviewing and updating this information carefully, as the system may not always transfer details accurately.

Maths and English Qualifications

We are committed to ensuring our workforce has a minimum of Maths and English qualifications at grade C/4 or above.

If you don't add these qualifications, this will affect your shortlisting score and could mean the difference between being progressed to interview or not. However, not having these won't exclude your application and we do weigh experience and skills higher in the shortlisting scoring.

If you don't have these qualifications, we will support you in gaining these during your employment with us at no financial cost to you.

Guidance on using AI when applying to EKC Group

Approach AI thoughtfully

At East Kent Colleges Group, we appreciate that technology can help you present your best self. Our guidance reflects our core values and showing how you embody these helps us understand you and ensures your application is genuine and consistent.

If you use AI tools while preparing your application, treat them as assistants, not authors. The goal is to communicate your genuine strengths and experiences, not to construct a persona that doesn't reflect who you are.

Our Values

Community – We value collaboration and inclusivity. Highlight real experiences, not those created by AI, so you can show how you support others.

Aspiration – Share your ambitions in your own words so we see your true motivation.

Respect – Be honest and authentic; use AI to support your writing, not replace your voice.

Excellence – Present accurate, clear information that aligns with what you'll discuss at interview.

Sustainability – Where relevant, show how your actions contribute to long-term positive impact.

Aligning your application with these values and using AI responsibly helps us form a clear, authentic picture of your strengths.

What matters most

Showcase your individuality

Our selection teams value applications that reveal your unique perspective and relevant background. Submissions that feel impersonal or overly polished by AI may prompt further scrutiny and could undermine your credibility.

Consistency counts

Interviews are designed to explore your story in depth. If your written responses don't align with what you share in person, it may raise questions about authenticity.

Smart ways to use AI

- Gather insights about East Kent Colleges Group or the wider sector
- Refine your writing for clarity and impact
- Proofread for spelling and grammar

What not to do

- Inventing or overstating your qualifications or experience
- Submitting generic, unedited AI-generated content
- Relying on AI to provide application responses that don't reflect your actual background
- Every application is reviewed by real people, not by automated systems
- We value honesty, clarity, and a true representation of your abilities
- If clarification is needed, we'll discuss your experience further at interview
- Data Responsibility
- Please avoid entering personal or sensitive information into public AI platforms, as this may conflict with data protection standards.

Need support or adjustments during your application? Reach out to the Resourcing Team for guidance on jobs@ekcgroup.ac.uk

Completing further applications

If you have completed a previous application, and we still have your data on our system, you can reapply for other roles with ease. When completing a new application, all you need to do is review and update your most recent experience and complete the statement parts of the application.

How to write your application statement

In most cases our application form has two statement questions.

1. Regarding your experience against the job specification.
2. Regarding your safeguarding knowledge and experience.

In some cases, point 1 is broken down into further specific questions related to the job specification.

Answering statement 1

Firstly, you will need to look at the job description of the role you're applying for and scroll down to the job specification part of the document. The job description can be found to the right of the job advert on our careers site. There are also links within the online application. There will be a table within the document named job specification, detailing skills, experience and education with tick boxes to show if this is assessed at shortlisting, interview or both. There is a number (2, 4 or 6) detailed against each point, which indicates how these are weighted in scoring.

It's important to provide examples of how and when you have met these criteria. Numbering each example helps us relate your experience against each specification.

Failure to give clear relevant examples, means you may not be able to maximise scoring at the shortlisting phase.

Example of a strong answer against one specification point

The specification: Skills Specification 5 (familiarity with use of IT)

Your answer: As a Lecturer, I have used IT daily for the last 5 years, using various Microsoft software (inc Outlook, Word, Excel etc) and other student specific software, to ensure the best student learning experience. In my most recent role at Canterbury College, I use interactive white boards effectively and had the opportunity to teach students using VR headsets in an immersive classroom. Personally, I use Adobe software's such as Photoshop to do some private design work.

Answering statement 2

Not having safeguarding experience won't always mean you are unsuccessful. However, certain roles will require a more significant understanding of safeguarding.

As we are an educational establishment, all employees have a safeguarding responsibility and therefore it is important to assess this.

We suggest researching the term 'safeguarding' if this isn't something you have come across previously. You may find that you have some experience although didn't know the term.

It is not enough to explain what you know about safeguarding in this statement but also add what experience you have in this field, providing examples.

It is not appropriate to use any personal information (such as names) of young people or adults you have worked with to explain your experience.

How we shortlist

- At least two people will complete a shortlisting form for every applicant.
- We look at each person specification criteria that is to be assessed at shortlisting, and score against this. Only your qualifications, skills and experience, employment and statements will be scored against.
- We operate a blind application process, and our Hiring Managers cannot see your personal and protected characteristics.
- We'll look for evidence and examples of how you meet each specific criteria and will score based on what we can see. If you do not provide evidence, you may not score as high as possible.

Person Specification criteria is set at 6, 4 or 2

Explanation of how these points are weighted are seen below:

- 6** **Minimum/critical** – criteria which is essential for the role i.e. it would be extremely difficult for the person to carry out the role without already having these essential skills, experiences or qualifications.
- 4** **Important** – criteria that would be significant to the candidate being successful in the role. These may be skills, experiences or qualifications that have substantial meaning for the role but could be supported or taught on the job.
- 2** **Other relevant** – it would be great if the candidate had but is not expected to be shortlisted.

When scoring, we review each criterion at full marks, half marks or no marks. Therefore, you could score:

- **Critical** – 6, 3 or 0
- **Important** – 4, 2 or 0
- **Other** – 2, 1 or 0

How we score

- You may receive full marks if you meet the criteria and have provided examples.
- You may receive half marks if you have partly met the criteria and have provided examples.
- You may not receive any marks, if you have not provided any examples of how you meet the criteria.
- In some cases, around qualifications for example. It may only be possible to score full marks, or no marks.

The Interview Process

If you have been shortlisted to interview, you will receive an email confirming this. This will instruct you to log back into the careers portal to select an interview slot. If you cannot make the day or slots available, you should email the Resourcing Team who will liaise with the Hiring Manager. Unfortunately, there isn't a guarantee that a different day can always be accommodated.

Once you have accepted an interview date and time, you will see interview instructions on the portal detailing any tasks, assessments or presentations set by the Hiring Manager. You will also get an email confirming your slot, with information about the location of the interview and anything else that may be important to know.

Interviews could contain one or more of the following:

- Assessment task
- Micro-teach – for all teaching positions
- Presentation

For some roles, we may share interview questions with you before the interview itself.

For certain roles, we will request that the applicant completes a Personality Profile Assessment (PPA) before the interview through an independent company named Thomas International.

The assessment is not a pass or fail test unless manipulation is attempted. The assessment categorises personality traits which assists the Hiring Manager and interview panel in their questioning and is not scored. If you have completed a PPA with us as part of a previous application within the last 6-months, the previous PPA could be used. We do not share the PPA report with the candidate until after the interview upon request.

How do we interview and assess

We will always have more than one individual in all interviews. The panel will contain a Hiring Manager whose level by default is at Deputy Head of Department or above, and other individual(s) at least at the level above the post advertised for. In some cases, due to specialist knowledge, this may not be the case.

Points to consider:

- Interviews may contain a task, presentation and/or micro-teach.
- In most cases, the main part of the interview will be in a question-and-answer format.
- For certain positions within the group, interview questions may be shared with you before the interview.
- Teaching positions will contain a micro-teach.
- If you have applied for a student facing role, there may be a student engagement session.
- You can request a tour of our site, and the Hiring Manager will accommodate where possible. Any applicant that isn't a current employee, will be supervised on site.
- The interview will contain one or more questions regarding Safeguarding and The Prevent Duty.
- You will have the opportunity to ask questions.
- Your gaps of employment will be explored.
- Your proof of ID will be requested.
- You will be informed when the outcome of the interview will be communicated.
- You will be asked if you have any development gaps that we can support you with if successful.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from all members of our communities and society. We are particularly keen to increase the diversity of our staff body and encourage applications from candidates where there is underrepresentation in our workforce.

We are proud to hold the **Positive About Disability Award** and are a **Disability Confident Employer**. This confirms our commitment to interviewing all applicants who declare that they have a disability and who meet the essential criteria outlined in the person specification.

Similarly, we have a commitment to **Care Leavers (Care Covenant Pledge)** and to current or previous **Armed Forces personnel (Armed Forces Covenant Pledge)** with a commitment to interview applicants who meet the position's essential criteria and who have declared this on their application.

If you would like more information about our Guaranteed Interview Scheme for these three criteria, please go to this section.

During the application process, you can disclose if you have a disability, are a care leaver or current/ex-armed forces personnel, and this will not be shared with the Hiring Manager, nor the shortlisting or interview panel unless you request this (for interview adjustments for instance). You can read more about interview adjustments within the Reasonable Interview Adjustment section of this document.

With any successful candidate, we offer occupational health assessments and will explore any reasonable adjustments to a role due to health needs or a disability.

We welcome applications from anyone wishing to work flexibly and flexible work requests can be made formally from the first day of employment.

Reasonable Interview Adjustments

We are committed to providing reasonable adjustments to support applicants during the interview process, ensuring a comfortable and fair experience. However, adjustments will be aligned with the essential requirements of the role to ensure the interview reflects the working environment. This helps ensure candidates can succeed not only in the interview but also in the role itself.

Here are some limited examples of what you could request:

- **Anxiety** – we could send you the interview questions before hand to prepare your examples of how you meet a job role. In this situation, we would share the questions with all applicants to ensure fairness.
- **A different environment** – If you are unable to access a certain environment, we could find somewhere more accessible, or a more relaxed environment.
- **Breaks** – You may find it challenging to attend a formal 1-hour interview without a break. We can break up our interview into bite-sized tasks, presentations and for student facing roles, we can assess your skills in the classroom.
- **Trauma** – If you have previous trauma and have triggers, you can let us know so we can review our processes and treat the interview with sensitivity, whilst removing anything that could be challenging.
- **Extra time** – We could offer additional time to complete any interview tasks.
- **Coloured overlays** – At times, we may supply documents to read within an interview. If you prefer, we can supply coloured overlays, so this is easier to read.
- **Assisted technology** – We have access to certain assistive technology. You can request something that might help you in your communication.
- **Online interviews** – When interviewing for our student facing roles, we often have a student engagement activity within our interviews, which is a requirement to complete face-to-face. In most other cases, we can be supportive of an online interview to support with your needs.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme

We offer a guaranteed interview scheme for the following categories:

- Care Leavers
- Disability
- Ex/ Current Armed Forces Personnel (and their partners)
- Specific companies who may be experiencing redundancies – each being for a limited time.
- Graduate Scheme – for Graduate Scheme applicants, if attended an Assessment Day

If the essential criteria, detailed in the job description (points weighted at 6 within the person specification), are met for the role you will be invited to interview. It is the final decision of the shortlisting panel to assess if you meet essential criteria when reviewing your application.

If you select one of these categories, this will not be seen by the Hiring Manager.

Please note that you may be asked to provide evidence to support your answer.

