

Hints and tips for your application

Firstly, thank you for your interest in applying for a role within Observations R&D at the Met Office. Met Office job applications are a little different to “standard industry” applications, and it can be really disappointing for the applicant, as well as us, when someone who has a lot of potential hasn’t drawn out the right things in their application and so can’t be taken through to interview. So, I have compiled a few personal notes here from my experience as a recruiting manager based on what I have seen and the feedback I have given. I hope these hints and tips are useful to you in your application process.

General

- Although the criteria listed are essential to the role, we appreciate everyone has different strengths and weaknesses so we encourage applicants to apply, even if they consider one or two areas may be slightly weaker than others.

Supporting statement questionnaire

- We assess your evidence against each criterion individually, so make sure you clearly cover each of the essential (and any desirable) criteria separately. You will be asked to enter evidence to support each in a separate box.
- If there is a word limit, this will be given in “How to Apply” section in the job advert, please follow this, or if there are any reasons this is not possible, reach out to careers@metoffice.gov.uk.
- Once you have completed your profile and the equal opportunities section you will reach the questionnaire section where there will be 7 essential criteria boxes and 1 desirable criteria box irrespective of the number of criteria the job you are applying for has, so if your advert doesn’t have all these, don’t worry, just fill in the ones that correspond and you can just leave the rest blank.
- We are looking for you to convey both your breadth of experience and some specific details through use of examples, demonstrating and evidencing your approach.
- When giving examples, we recommend following the CARL (Context, Action, Result, Learning) approach to ensure the examples are structured, specific and clearly demonstrate what you did and how this corresponds to the criteria – there are many resources online that explain this method further e.g. this one from the University of Edinburgh <https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/carl>.
- Please remember to highlight your role and contribution in any group work.
- Although clearly not a criteria of a Met Office job application(!), there is an annotated example to help demonstrate some of the tips above on the second page of this document.

Further information

If you have any questions, please reach out to careers@metoffice.gov.uk who will be able to answer about the process or help if you need support to be able to apply, or they will pass on your question to one of the recruitment panel if it is about the role/culture of the team/flexible or part-time working/etc. and we will either get back to you with an answer or arrange a time to chat it through.

We look forward to welcoming your application.

Showing relevant breadth in your experience and your general approach.

E1: Demonstrable experience of making cakes and providing these at a range of occasions.

I have been a keen amateur baker for the past 8 years, but for the last year I have been running a small cake business around my other commitments. Within this time I have focused on developing my skills in a range of different bakes including cupcakes, traybakes and tiered cakes in a range of flavours from traditional Victoria sponge and carrot cake to the more unusual purple ube chiffon sponge. More recently I have focused on mastering specialist decoration of cakes and am able to use buttercream, sugar paste and fondant to decorate in both 2 and 3 dimensions. Over the past 5 years I have made over 50 different bakes/cakes for a range of occasions including family parties, charity bake sales (raising over £500 after costs), weddings and gifts. I have my food hygiene certificate and ensure that I follow appropriate processes to ensure both the safety and efficiency of my bakes.

Context – what was the situation?

Result – what were the outcomes of your actions?

Showing some relevant examples.

Make sure to go through the criteria and pick up all the parts of it and ensure you address all of these in your answer.

If you have measurable evidence of impact this can help show the facts clearly and unequivocally.

Action – what did you do and why?

Learning – what did you learn and how have you changed what you've done since as a result?

I am able to balance both volume and standards, for example in January 2024 I hosted a fundraising coffee morning where I made 24 cupcakes of 3 different flavours, coffee, vanilla and gluten free chocolate. I had to carefully plan my time and calculate ingredients to ensure I didn't over order or run out and ensure I balanced enough time to get everything baked cooled and decorated whilst ensuring the freshness of the cakes. The event was very successful, raising over £75 for the charity. I received lots of feedback about the flavour and texture of my cakes and I received a booking for a two-tier baby shower cake (after they tasted the cupcakes and saw examples of my tiered cakes in my portfolio). With hindsight although I catered for those who were gluten intolerant, I did not cater for those that were vegan and this is something I have addressed, for example at a recent bake sale I ensured to also have a vegan lemon drizzle cupcake. I also realised had I taken along some business cards it might have made it easier for more people to make contact if they enjoyed the cakes and I have now had some made up which I take to other events. I am also able to create high-end one-off cakes, for example I recently made a wedding cake. For efficiency I baked and froze the cakes to enable them to be fresh and decorated at the last minute. This involved highly technical decoration that took 2 days including a fluted chocolate collar, fondant modelled bride and groom and intricate piping.