

# Information Factsheet:

## How to apply?

Thank you for your interest in the upon Development Programme and the role of a Director of Children's Services as a potential career path for you. This career direction you are considering is a rewarding one.

There are three core aspects in the application process:

1. Competency-based written questions
2. Up-to-date CV
3. 2-minute video personal statement

This document has been designed to provide you with some hints and tips to help you prepare your application.

## 1. Competency-based written questions

There are three competency-based written questions within the application process for the upon programme. The questions ask you to share your perspectives on the priorities for Children's Services, provide evidence of how you have led sustainable improvements and how you have promoted diversity, equality and inclusion for children and their families.

Responding to the **competency questions**:

- Plan your response:
  - Think about the question and then think about the structure.
  - Focus on: context – example – outcome.
  - Remember sentence and paragraph structure, layout and language.
  - Avoid the use overly technical language and don't use 'management speak'.
- Evidence strategic and operational:
  - Draw on your current experience, but remember you are positioning yourself to progress as a future Director.
- Include tangible evidence and examples:
  - What did you do? (Not other people)
  - Ask yourself – are you answering the question?
  - Back it up – evidence, examples, outcomes.



- Allow time to finalise:
  - Don't leave it until the last minute.
  - Allow time before reviewing.
  - Proofread and sense check.
  - Check grammar and spelling – and then check it again.

## 2. Your CV

To support your application, you will need to include an up-to-date copy of your CV.

Everyone knows how to prepare their CV right? It is still worth reviewing your CV to make sure it is relevant and targeted for this opportunity.

Reviewing your CV:

- There is no such thing as a perfect CV. Keep it simple.
- Think of your CV as a shop window – to show your experience, education and suitability so that people want to come through door and explore further.
- Think about format and layout – is it accessible?; is it easy to read and follow?
- Career history with notable achievements that are relevant.
- Education – but highlight relevant courses also.
- Personal profiles – single paragraph at most, couple of sentences, think about what you are trying to convey and why you have included it.
- Include voluntary work.
- Check grammar, spelling, layout and sentence structure – and then check it again.
- Explain gaps in your CV.

## 3. 2-minute video personal statement

The final requirement for the application process is to record a short, up to 2-minute video outlining your personal motivations for considering the role of a Director of Children's Services in the future, and how you think the programme will help you achieve this.

Any learning programme like this is as much about the participants and how you engage and learn from one another, as it is about the content.

You do not need to film your video using your own device. We have embedded the video software into the application process. All you need to do is prepare what you want to say and how you want to present yourself most effectively.



### Completing your 2-minute video statement:

- Talk about your drive and motivation to become a DCS:
  - Why do you want to be a DCS?
  - How will the programme help you achieve this goal?
  - We want to see and hear your passion, motivation and drive for the role .
- Prepare your key points in advance:
  - Do not overly script what you are going to say though. This will come across as stilted and unnatural.
  - Be clear on your key messages.
  - Focus on being yourself and being as natural as you can be.
- Think about how you are presenting yourself:
  - Make sure you are dressed in a way that you feel comfortably presents who you are.
  - When filming, make sure it's in a quiet space where you'll have no interruptions.
- Practice sufficiently so you are comfortable:
  - Prior to starting your filming, practice filming yourself and timing it offline to ensure your video is only 2 minutes long and you are happy with your key points.
- Using the system:
  - You will have 3 opportunities to film yourself on the system.
  - We recommend you use all 3 opportunities to practice.
  - Once completed you can select the best one to submit.

## Declaration Form

If your application is successful and you are offered a place on the programme, your place will be contingent on getting your employer to sign a Declaration of Support. This is a short, 1 page document that indicates your employer will support you and your development needs throughout the duration of the programme.

- Speak to your line manager/employer
  - Ensure they are aware of your interest in the programme.
  - Discuss what time and support you will need to complete the programme successfully.

If you have any questions please email [upon@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:upon@gatenbysanderson.com)

