

Xentrall

Shared Services

Delivering Excellence for All

'Just the Job'

Xentrall Recruitment Services

Everything you need to know about applying for a vacancy with Stockton-on-Tees and Darlington Borough Councils.



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL



DARLINGTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

About us

Who are Xentrall?

Xentrall Shared Services is a groundbreaking partnership between Stockton-on-Tees and Darlington Borough Council. Xentrall works jointly with both Councils, supporting them in the delivery of their services.

"Xentrall Shared Services is a ground-breaking partnership..."

What do Xentrall do?

The services currently being delivered by Xentrall are ICT, Design and Print, Transactional HR and Transactional Finance.

The Xentrall Recruitment Team supports every recruitment campaign within Stockton-on-Tees and Darlington Borough Council.

We deliver a recruitment service for every vacancy which includes advertising, arranging interviews and completing pre-employment checks for successful candidates.

The Xentrall Recruitment Team is committed to promoting Stockton-on-Tees and Darlington Borough Council's within the local community. We regularly attend job fairs, career workshops and local events offering free advice and guidance on employment opportunities and vacancies within both Councils.

Our working hours are:

Monday to Thursday

8.30am to 5.00pm

Friday

8.30am to 4.30pm

How can I contact you?

If you have any questions or queries about vacancies and employment within either Council you can contact us by phone:

Recruitment Enquiry Line:

(01642) 526992

Or via email:

recruitment@darlington.gov.uk or

recruitment@stockton.gov.uk

Vacancies

What kind of vacancies are there?

We support the recruitment process for every department within both Councils and Tees Valley Unlimited, so the range of vacancies is very broad. Vacancies vary from administration, gardeners and support staff through to professional roles such as accountants, lawyers and social workers.

We also advertise all vacancies within primary and secondary schools under local authority control. Vacancies for these establishments can range from cleaners, cooks and caretakers to teaching posts and Head Teachers.

When are the vacancies updated?

New opportunities are advertised every Friday. Vacancies are usually open for two weeks from first advertisement although this can vary for certain positions.

Where are they advertised?

The best place to find opportunities is by visiting the Jobs page on each Council's website.

Visit www.darlington.gov.uk/jobs or www.stockton.gov.uk/jobs to see the current opportunities.

As well as being advertised on our website every role is also publicised through Job Centre Plus, www.lgjobs.com and various other websites and mediums.

As a general rule, we rarely advertise vacancies in the press.

"New vacancies are advertised and refreshed every Friday and are usually open for two weeks..."

Applying for a role with the Council

How do I apply?

We recommend that you apply via the Council's website using the online application forms. The online form is easy to use and your progress can be saved at the end of each section. This means you can complete it over several sessions.

If you don't have access to the internet, you can request a paper application pack by calling the Recruitment Enquiry Line: **(01642) 526992**

Can I submit my CV instead?

All applicants must complete a standard application form to be considered for a post. If you submit a CV alongside your application it will be passed to the recruiting manager as supporting information but can't be used to make a decision on your suitability for the role.

Can you hold onto my CV and contact me when suitable roles are advertised?

Council policy on equal opportunities and fair recruitment states that the successful applicant must be selected from the candidates who apply for the position when it is advertised.

What information will you give me about a vacancy on the website?

Our advert will give you a brief overview of the role we are recruiting for and will help you decide if it is a position you are interested in. Each advert will also contain links to a Job Description and Person Specification that you should use to find out more about the role.

If you have requested a paper application pack, copies of these two documents will be enclosed.

What is a Job Description?

This document describes the role and responsibilities of the job you are interested in. It will describe the main purpose of the job and will list the tasks and duties which you will have to perform if you are appointed.

What is a Person Specification?

The Person Specification is probably the most important document in the whole recruitment process. It tells you what skills, knowledge and experience a person must have to be able to do the job.

Decisions on who to invite for interview are made by comparing what you tell the recruiting manager on your application form with that asked for in the person specification.

"The Person Specification is probably the most important document in the whole recruitment process..."


How do I make sure that I give you the right information on my application form?

Our application forms have a question that asks you to tell the recruiting manager why you would be the best person for the job. (See the screen shots below). This question gives you the chance to sell yourself to the manager and make sure you stand out from the crowd.

Darlington's Application Form:

PERSONAL STATEMENT
Please use this space to give further details of career, experience and private interests relevant to your application. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Stockton's Application Form:

The Job and You:
Please provide a detailed statement of the skills, knowledge and experience that makes you suitable for this job.


The easiest way to ensure you cover everything is to list the essential criteria from the person specification and provide your evidence against each of them. If you also meet the desirable criteria, you should do the same for those criteria too. There is no limit to how much information you can include here but the information should be well structured and easy to follow.

Some useful tips:

- Use plain English – avoid jargon and slang words.
- Try not to ramble, keep your information to the point and professional.
- Be as specific as possible, address the requirements of the post giving examples of when you have done the tasks or similar duties to those outlined in the Job Description.
- Consider any work experience, skills or knowledge gained through studies, qualifications and other training. Also any personal qualities and skills you can demonstrate through leisure interests and hobbies.
- Draft your statement first and then spend some time editing it. Remember to read it through, checking your spelling and grammar.
- Keep a copy; you may be asked questions about it in your interview.

What happens to my application after I have applied?

It will be received and processed by Xentrall Recruitment. It is then used by the interview panel members for shortlisting.

How long will it take before I hear about a job I have applied for?

Due to the number of applications we receive for our vacancies, we only contact shortlisted candidates. If you have not had a response within 4 weeks of the closing date, you should assume you have been unsuccessful. You can also contact Xentrall Recruitment to enquire whether you have been shortlisted on the Recruitment Enquiry Line: **(01642) 526992**.

Interviews

Being invited for an interview means you've effectively convinced the recruiting panel that you're capable of filling the role with the Council. A face-to-face meeting is your opportunity to show them that you're the best candidate available for the position and for you to decide that this is the right role and that the Council is an employer, which suits you.

What can I do to impress at interview?

First impressions are important. You can create a good first impression by:

- Making sure you look clean and smart
- Smiling, making eye contact and shaking hands with the interview panel

Other tips on making a great impression:-

- Arrive in good time for your interview; plan your route in advance. Maps to Council premises are available on the Council's website.
- Be polite, be yourself and be honest,
- Do background research; find out about the Council and the department you have applied to work for. This information is available on the Council website.

"...you are normally notified within 4 weeks of the closing date if you have been shortlisted..."

What will the interview be like?

The panel who are interviewing you are trying to find out about you, your knowledge of the job and your skills. Interview questions are designed to give you the opportunity to 'sell' yourself to the Council.

Some useful tips on answering questions:

- Listen to the question and make sure your response covers what you have been asked. If you're not sure – ASK.
- Take a few seconds to think about what you are going to say, rather than just saying the first thing that comes to mind.
- When giving answers, try to use different examples rather than using the same situation/task over and over again.
- Keep your answers simple; don't use jargon or abbreviations that the panel might not understand.
- Be positive; don't be afraid to talk about your successes.

What if I want to ask some questions of the Interview Panel?

All Council Interview Panels will give you the opportunity to ask about us and our services - so try and make sure you do!

This is your chance to check that this is a job and employer that suits you. If you cannot think of anything to ask, don't panic; say that the panel have already provided answers to the questions you were going to ask.

Some examples of questions you could ask:

- How does the Council invest in people and career development?
- What new services or initiatives do you have in the pipeline?
- Who will I report to?

"This is your chance to check that a role with the Council is right for you..."

What happens after my interview?

After the interview panel has met all of the shortlisted candidates, they will make a decision on which candidate(s) to offer the role to. This decision will be based on your performance at the interview and measured against the criteria laid out in the Person Specification.

When the panel has reached their decision you will be contacted by a member of the interview panel to advise you of their decision.

There is no set timescale for the interview panel to make a decision, but panels will let you know how soon they are looking to make a decision at interview stage.

If you are successful and you are offered the position, the offer of employment is subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks. These checks can include employment references, medical clearances, CRB and Immigration checks.

If you are already in employment, it is not recommended that you tender your resignation until we have completed ALL pre-employment checks. You will be contacted again by the recruiting manager to agree a start date once Xentrall Recruitment has satisfactorily obtained the checks.

If your application is unsuccessful, it is the policy of both Councils to offer full and detailed feedback on the reasons you have been unsuccessful. This is given by a member of the interview panel.

If you have not received any communication from an interview panel member within the advised timescale, please contact Xentrall Recruitment by phone on (01642) 526992.

Finally ... Good Luck for the future from everyone at Xentrall Shared Services!

Xentrall Recruitment Services

PO Box 891
Prince Regent Street
Stockton-on-Tees
TS19 1JT

Phone: (01642) 526992
Web: www.xentrall.org.uk