

create a better place



# Environment Officer Candidate Information Pack

Job title: Environmental Regulation & Enforcement Officer (Environment Officer)

Job location: Various locations across England

Date: December 2017

Reference: Vacancy 6958

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# 1. Our organisation

## Our organisation

We are the Environment Agency. We protect and improve the environment. Acting to reduce the impacts of a changing climate on people and wildlife is at the heart of everything we do. We:

- protect and improve the quality of water, making sure there is enough for people, businesses, agriculture and the environment
- fight waste crime
- reduce the risks to people, properties and businesses from flooding and coastal erosion

Our work helps to ensure people can enjoy the water environment through angling and navigation. We look after land quality, promote sustainable land management and help protect and enhance wildlife habitats. And we work closely with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations.

Of course, none of this will be possible without the professionalism and dedication of our staff. We work with government, local councils, businesses, civil society groups and communities to make our environment a better place for people and wildlife. As a public body we are committed to promoting equality and diversity in all we do and valuing the diversity of our workforce, customers and communities.

We're committed to helping our people find new ways of working to maintain our focus on creating a better place for people and wildlife. For more information on the Environment Agency and what we do, please visit: [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/aboutus](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/aboutus)



## 2. The role

Being an Environment Officer is one of the most important roles at the Environment Agency. Environment Officers regulate everything from waste management sites to farms and other agricultural/land management activities across a range of urban and rural sites, all of which may impact on the local environment. You will join one of our customer facing frontline teams working directly to help create a cleaner, safer and healthier environment.

Based in one of our area offices, you'll work in an operational team focusing on either Land & Water or Waste issues. In the Waste team you will focus on operators and companies in the waste sector. In the Land & Water team you'll focus on water quality, agriculture and water resources. The work in both teams includes:

- enforcing environmental regulations
- influencing companies and businesses to move from correction to prevention
- using your excellent customer service skills to engage with local communities and operators
- visiting sites to conduct inspections and taking action if environmental regulations have been breached
- dealing with and investigating environmental offences and incidents
- giving evidence in court
- attending to out of hours emergencies as part of a standby rota
- advising how people and businesses can improve the environment

You will be responsible for regulating a range of activities to ensure they are carried out without polluting the environment or causing harm to people. Sometimes we have to take tough action to achieve these aims and, at times, you will need to investigate environmental offences. You may also be required on occasion to give evidence in a court of law. You won't need to do this until you're fully trained and feel ready, and you'll be supported by our legal and Environmental Crime teams.

The role will require you to take preventative actions as well as supporting wider incident management. This may include taking part in a duty rota to provide a 24 hour response to incidents. This is a team role and you'll never be on your own – you'll have back up from colleagues and incident support staff.

The job is extremely varied, vital and sometimes challenging. You may be working with business customers to help them operate legally; while at other times you will be enforcing the law and making sure operators improve their performance.

You'll be required to make frequent and sometimes unscheduled travel to sites across your area - we'll provide you with a lease car but you must have a full UK driving licence.

## What skills do you need?

The role of an Environment Officer is varied and you'll draw upon a number of key skills and personal characteristics. You'll need to be able to:

- organise your workload
- handle confrontational people
- be confident and assertive
- take the initiative
- adapt your behaviour and communication style to different people and situations
- build strong relationships with a diverse range of people
- integrate into a team
- solve problems
- be computer literate
- record information correctly
- work independently when required
- enjoy working both outdoors and in an office environment
- be passionate about the environment and willing to learn about environmental regulation and enforcement

## Top capabilities

As part of the application and interview processes, we'll be looking at you to tell us how you:

- communicate effectively
- focus on customers and partners
- manage your health, safety and wellbeing
- influence and persuade others
- take decisions and solve problems
- focus on efficiency
- build and sustain relationships with others
- manage data and record information
- achieve results
- use your initiative
- work in teams

Please refer to the **Top Capabilities** document (attached to the vacancy) that describes our capability framework in further detail. The **How to Apply** section (section 8 below) provides advice on how to complete your application.

## What experience do you need?

Ideally you will have some exposure to a regulatory, enforcement or customer focused role. Perhaps you've inspected or evaluated sites, handled or investigated complaints or been in a role in which you've had to have difficult conversations with people. You may even already be in a regulatory role or have had exposure to a regulated industry in the past. Whatever your background, you'll be interested in the environmental sector and be willing to enforce environmental regulations, even if this means sometimes dealing with confrontational situations.

Whilst relevant work experience would be an advantage, it's less important to us than your ability to demonstrate the key transferrable skills and personal qualities that we're looking for.

## What qualifications do you need?

We're not seeking any specific qualifications for these roles. It's much more important that you have the right personal characteristics and a passion for protecting the environment. Please do not be put off applying if you do not have a degree, A Level or other qualification because we will provide you with all the training you'll need.

## What else do you need to know?

- The nature of the job will involve travel to (and working at) a variety of locations across your area for regulatory, monitoring, enforcement and incident management purposes, including remote sites, riverbanks, uneven terrain and agricultural and industrial premises. A vehicle will be provided or expenses paid as appropriate.
- You must have a valid full UK driving licence.
- The training scheme includes a week's residential course and other ad-hoc overnight stays - you must be willing to be away from home in order to attend these courses. You'll receive plenty of notice so that you can plan your home life around these.
- While we welcome applications for those requiring part time and flexible career opportunities, you must be able and willing to work flexibly, as in certain circumstances you may be asked to work unsociable hours.
- You may be required to take your turn on the duty incident rota for call out and standby. The rotas are scheduled well in advance to allow plenty of time for you to plan your involvement.

## To help bring the role to life, here are some views from current Environment Officers:



I've been an Environment Officer since 2008. It is one of the best roles within the Environment Agency where you get to work with different operators from large to small companies, liaise with Local Authorities, local businesses and emergency services such as the Fire and Rescue Services and the Police.

The Environment Agency is committed to training and promoting personal development. It also takes the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff very seriously. I am a mother of two and can say that the Environment Agency is a flexible place to work in. It allows me time to deliver my role as well as meet the demands of a family life.

Being an Environment Officer, no two days are the same. The role can be challenging and sometimes demanding, but it's very rewarding too. Joining as an Environment Officer, you will get to meet with the many wonderful people behind the Environment Agency brand, see how we do things and why we do them. You will also feel that inner satisfaction of having made our world a better place.

Gloria Enock – Hertfordshire and North London



After working in mental health for some years I decided to go after my dream career. I took my BSc (Hons) in Biology and Ecology at 40 and was excited to accept the Environment Officer role a year after graduation. The role has given me the opportunity to make really good use of my particular combination of scientific and people skills.

Your day can range from interpreting data to using the fine art of persuasion to bring an operator into compliance, and then on to site inspections with water companies and finally catching up on your admin during a quiet moment! The real skills you need in this role are the ability to work well with others and knowing where to look for what you need.

The Environment Agency is an organisation that really looks after you – I have become a carer for my wife over the last year and have felt supported to continue work with the recognition that I may need to work flexibly at times. Your health, safety and wellbeing are high priorities and that really supports you in getting on with your work and being the best you can.

**Finn Raven – East Midlands**



Being an Environment Officer can be hectic, busy, varied, frustrating but ultimately rewarding as we are there to deliver positive outcomes for people and the environment. The variety of work an Environment Officer undertakes requires a broad range of knowledge and skills, and the unpredictable nature of the job can test this to the limit.

During a recent visit to a small scrap yard that was applying for a permit to recycle metal, I received a call saying that thousands of fish were gasping in a canal. The incident, in a very public area of town, resulted in 1,500 fish dying but many more being saved as oxygen was quickly added to the water. The incident resulted in television crews and reporters from radio and newspapers attending too. In this instance the cause of the incident was natural, so no enforcement action could be taken, but it can still take days to deal with, and metal recycling facilities still want to recycle metal, so it is vital for us to be able to prioritise and organise our workload in a way that can cope with the unexpected while still delivering for our customers. Knowing that you have played a part in saving thousands of fish, or in other cases rescuing swans from oil slicks or supporting the businesses we regulate, and seeing the results of this, is very gratifying.

We deal with many kinds of customers, from the truly grateful and helpful to the openly aggressive and unreasonable, which has prepared me well for the exertions of fatherhood. Being a father requires flexible working, and I have found the Environment Agency very accommodating when this is required.

**Adam Glassford – Lincolnshire & Northampton**

# 3. Training and development

You will receive the necessary training and development to ensure that you have the skills needed to perform the role of an Environment Officer to a high standard. This will include a mixture of on the job training, mentoring, e-learning and some structured classroom based learning sessions. The training and development programme is vital for ensuring you have a good understanding on all aspects of environmental regulation, can respond to incidents and to maximise your future career options.

As you gain more knowledge and experience, your work will focus on either Waste or Land & Water work and you will be encouraged and supported to excel in one of these areas. You may get the opportunity to move between teams depending on business need.

## How long will it take?

New Environment Officers join us at Level A. This is a training and development level which provides you with the basic training to do your job. The training is broken down into three stages – Induction, Training Stage 1 and Training Stage 2. All new recruits join us at the Induction Stage.

Level A Training	Salary per annum	Timescale to complete
Induction	£20,234	Minimum 9 months
Training Stage 1	£21,336	Minimum 6 months
Training Stage 2	£21,908	Minimum 6 months

### Induction Stage

Here you will receive induction training as well as coaching in the skills, knowledge and behaviour required for the Environment Officer role. This stage runs alongside the normal probationary period for all new recruits. A minimum of nine months must be worked in the Induction Stage before you can progress to Training Stage 1.

### Training Stages 1 & 2

At these stages you will apply the skills gained at the induction stage.

Environment Officer Level A is a development stage and continuous self-development is important for career progression to the next level of Environment Officer, Level B. Level A is just the start and we expect all our recruits to be able to progress sufficiently to achieve Level B and an increase in salary to £27,138.

We all learn at different rates and you will be given time to put what you've learnt into practice. There is flexibility to extend the time spent in each training stage according to individual needs – you will learn at your own pace and progress only when you and your Team Leader feel you're absolutely ready to. Level A training typically takes between **two to three years**, however please note that this is a guideline only.

## What will the training cover?

The introductory training programme (Level A) will cover the basic aspects of the Environment Officer role including:

- health, safety and wellbeing
- operational procedures
- legislation and regulation
- incident response
- water quality issues
- enforcement
- sampling and monitoring procedures
- pollution prevention
- waste issues
- personal style and impact

## What will I achieve?

At the end of the training programme you will be able to carry out a range of crucial environmental activities such as:

- basic site inspections
- taking environmental samples
- attending and responding to pollution incidents
- giving advice on pollution prevention and waste minimisation issues

In short, you will be well placed to make an immediate contribution to environmental protection and as you build the key skills and competencies, you will start to make a real operational contribution to your team during the training period.

## What will the training be like?

The training is all geared towards developing the ability to do something, rather than simply knowing about it. Therefore the training process provides you with the opportunity to apply your acquired knowledge and demonstrate competence.

At the start of the training you will be issued with a development log to guide you through and document your training. It is a highly demanding but rewarding training programme. To succeed you will need to be self-motivated and take active ownership of your personal learning and development.

The training will be a combination of:

- formal classroom based learning, which will contain elements of case study, group work, discussion and presentation
- self-learning through e-learning and distance learning which will give you an opportunity to develop new knowledge at your own pace and at an appropriate time
- structured field based work, where you will be trained in field or office based tasks by expert colleagues

Please note that some of the training may be residential but we will give you plenty of notice in order for you to make arrangements to be away from friends and family.

Your learning and development doesn't stop once you have completed the introductory development programme. We continue to invest in ensuring you have the right skills to do your job by offering modular based development programmes linked to your role.



## 4. Is this the right career for you?

The Environment Officer role is varied and demanding, but it is very rewarding too. As with all jobs, some people are better suited to the role than others.

To help you decide if this is the right career for you we've put together the following list of situations you may find yourself in as a fully-trained Environment Officer. You won't encounter these types of situations every single day, of course. But we'd like to be honest with you so that you know if the role is something you'll enjoy doing. If you are not sure whether the job is really for you, ask yourself – and be honest – about how you would react to these situations having received the relevant training and development.

- You have made an early start at your desk one morning as you have a lot of administrative tasks to do and a case file to complete by the end of the week. But you answer the phone and are told about a serious pollution incident at the far end of your patch that you will obviously have to attend.
- You have to make a decision about how to deal with a river pollution incident. There is no straightforward solution and whatever you decide to do will have an impact on someone. You need to think fast, and maybe take a course of action that you are asked to defend afterwards.
- You are facing an upset member of the public who thinks that you haven't done enough to protect their health and livelihood from a neighbouring scrap yard. Despite your rational and logical argument you cannot win the person round and you are told that you'll be hearing from the person's MP.
- You are attending a public meeting about the regulation of a landfill site that you inspect. A councillor questions the way the landfill operator is regulated and everybody's eyes turn to you.
- Following up a report of pollution you drive into the yard of a farm. A dog is barking on the other side of your car door. You can see a man in a shed across the yard, however he makes no effort to acknowledge your presence.
- You are giving evidence in a court of law. A lawyer is pressing you about a point of detail and putting you under a lot of pressure.

One of the many great things about being an Environment Officer is that you'll genuinely be able to see where you've made a difference. The decisions you'll make will have an outcome and a significant impact on the environment. Here's what else you can expect in the day in the life of an Environment Officer:

- There has been a fire at a barn containing straw and you have spent two days organising and working with the Fire and Rescue Service to minimise the impact of water run-off and deal with the resulting waste that is now in the nearby river. You have Fisheries and Field Operations colleagues deploying aeration pumps. At the end of your shift you visit the owner of the trout fishery which is downstream. His fish are ok and he later emails you with his thanks.
- You have been helping a local volunteer group improve a neglected urban river and how best to target their efforts. They have organised schools and local people to remove rubbish and they in turn are now pressing the local businesses and the water company to reduce their discharges. The Local Authority has installed footpaths so more people can enjoy the river.

- A big land redevelopment is planned and you are asked to comment. Using our data and your knowledge and experience, you get enhancements to the sewage systems and a sustainable system for surface water management that benefits nature and wildlife.
- On a farm inspection you find the slurry from manure storage is badly contained and a threat to the local river. The farmer hadn't noticed this and he takes swift action.
- A large food processing factory has been transferring its waste to a farmer who spreads this as a fertiliser. In winter this is a risk to the environment due to rainfall. You intervene and the company installs storage tanks to give a contingency for periods when the fields are too wet.
- You get a call from a member of the public, who is irate that oil from a scrapyards is running across a nearby footpath and no-one has done anything about it. You have just taken over as coordinator of the site and despite your explanation the member of the public states that you are ineffective. You attend the site, verify the incident and bring the operator onto the footpath to show them the issue. The operator is appalled and immediately sets to work to clear this up and put new gravel down and generally tidies up the area. The member of the public calls you, apologises and thanks you for your help.
- You carry out a check of where waste is being taken from a civic amenity site and find that waste plastics are heading to a site and poses a fire risk. You immediately close the site down and work with the operator to get it cleared and avert a potentially serious environmental incident.



## 5. Roles available

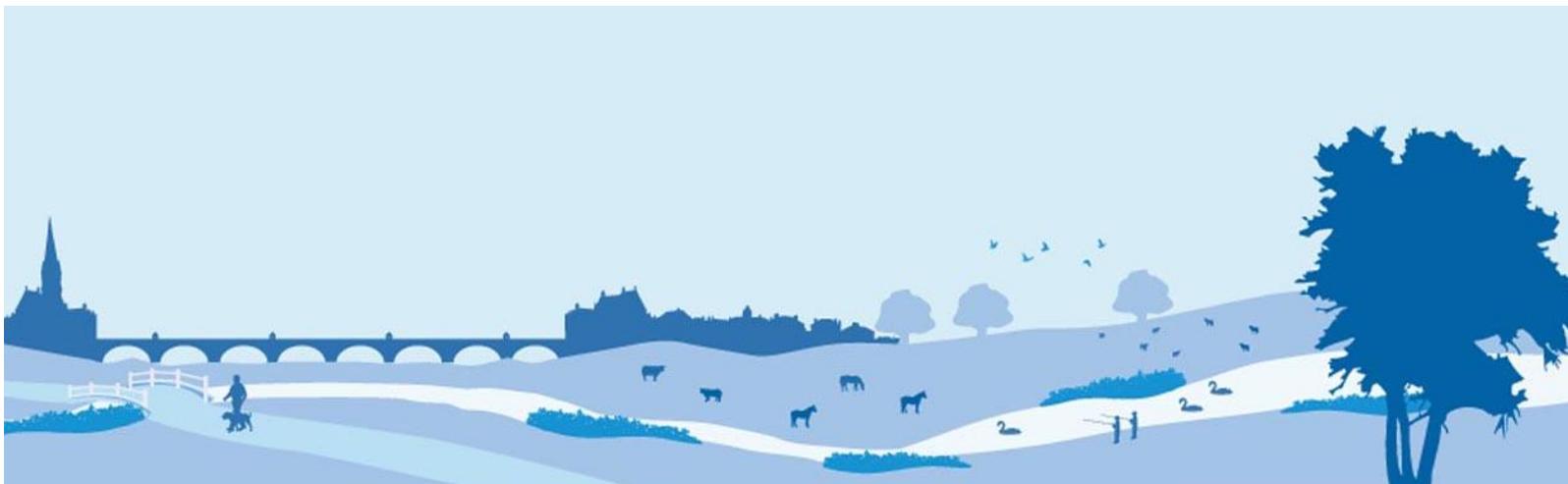
Area	Locations	Land & Water team	Waste team	Role type
Cumbria & Lancashire	Preston or Penrith	✓	✓	12 month fixed term contract
Devon, Cornwall & Isles of Scilly	Exeter, Bodmin, Bideford, Launceston or Redruth	✓	✓	18 month fixed term contract
East Anglia	Norwich, Ipswich, Colchester (Kelvedon), Ely, Bedford or Brampton	✓	✓	Mixture of permanent and 12 month fixed term contract posts
East Midlands	Nottingham, Leicester (Rothley) or Ripley*	✓		Permanent
Hertfordshire & North London	Welwyn Garden City		✓	Permanent
Kent, South London & East Sussex	Canterbury, Sevenoaks (Tonbridge), West Malling or London (Abbey Wood)	✓	✓	Permanent
Lincolnshire & Northamptonshire	Lincoln, Peterborough, Kettering or Spalding	✓	✓	Mixture of permanent and 12 month fixed term contract posts
Solent & South Downs	Pevensey, Worthing, Chichester, Romsey or Isle of Wight	✓	✓	Permanent
Thames	Wallingford or Farnham	✓	✓	Permanent
Wessex	Bridgwater, Blandford or Chippenham	✓	✓	Permanent
West Midlands	Fradley (Lichfield), Solihull, Stafford, Kidderminster, Tewkesbury or Shrewsbury		✓	Permanent
Yorkshire	Leeds, York, Beverley or Rotherham	✓	✓	Permanent

\*There are roles based within the East Midlands at Nottingham, Rothley and Ripley. If you're interested in working at our Ripley site, please select 'Nottingham' when you apply and your application will be sent to the correct area for shortlisting. This will not mean you'll be based in Nottingham.

# 6. Salary and benefits

- Starting salary:** £20,234 per annum (pro rata if part time) which increases as you progress through our structured training programme.
- Lease car:** All Environment Officers are provided with a lease car. Please note you'll pay taxable benefit on the full value of the vehicle
- Hours of work:** 37 hours (pro rata if part time)
- Leave entitlement:** Your annual leave allowance will be 25 days (pro rata if part time) plus bank holidays. This increases to 30 days with length of service. We also offer up to two days paid environmental outcome days each year. These give you the opportunity to take part in community activities with a clear environmental outcome for people and wildlife.
- Pension:** We will enrol you into the [Environment Agency Pension Fund](#) (EAPF) on commencing employment. The EAPF is part of the [Local Government Pension Scheme](#) (LGPS). It is a career average defined benefits scheme, which means you will build up benefits based on your pay each year. We will base your pension contributions on your pensionable pay and you will receive tax and national insurance relief on your contributions. You will begin by contributing 5.8% of your pensionable pay. Whilst you are in the scheme we will also pay an employer contribution into your pension pot. We currently pay 18.5%, so this is a very generous scheme.
- Work/life balance:** We support flexible working hours and practices to help you strike a good balance between your work life and your personal life. We will also encourage you to keep developing your skills and professional knowledge throughout your career.
- Diversity:** We are committed to diversity and inclusion. We want all our staff to feel valued and respected and to see this as a great place to work. Diversity: it's in our nature.





## 7. Further information

This role will include travel to other offices and site visits and therefore requires a full UK driving licence. A lease car is provided as part of the benefits package.

For further details please send an email to [RI\\_Recruitment@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:RI_Recruitment@environment-agency.gov.uk).

We are fully committed to having an inclusive workforce to reflect the communities we serve. We welcome applications from candidates seeking flexible working patterns, including part time and job share.

Please note that Environment Agency employees are not civil servants, so you may wish to check your eligibility for continuity of employment by contacting your HR department. All eligible bodies are listed in the Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government etc.) (Modification) Order 1999.

Employment agency workers and contractors are considered to be external candidates and should therefore only apply for positions that are being advertised externally. They are also not eligible to claim continuity of employment should they be successful in securing a position with the Environment Agency.

Please note all successful applicants must undergo Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) checks prior to commencement of employment. This includes a basic criminal records check.

For the great majority of roles in the Environment Agency this will be sufficient and only certain roles will require a higher level of clearance. Should this be necessary, you will be advised of this during the recruitment process.

## 8. How to apply

We use an online recruitment system. To make the application process simple and straightforward, and so that you know how it works and what we need from you, we've put together a few hints and tips.

The first thing you need to do is sign up to our online recruitment system. You'll need a valid e-mail address to log in and apply for jobs, as all communication from us will be via e-mail. You can do this via the vacancy you are interested in by selecting '**Apply**' at the bottom of the advert. Once you've clicked this link you'll then be asked:

1. Do you have the right to live and work in the UK? – please answer 'yes' or 'no'
2. Do you have the required qualifications or equivalent experience, which were stated in the job advert? – we are not seeking any specific qualifications or experience for this role, so please answer 'yes' to this question
3. Are you currently an employee of this organisation? – please answer 'yes' or 'no'

You'll then see the '**Register**' page. Simply complete the details and select '**Submit Registration**' and register to the system. You only need to sign up to the system once; you'll just be able to login next time. You can then carry on with your application.

When it comes to the actual application, you need to fill out each section. Please be aware that the system will **automatically time out** if you are inactive for more than 60 minutes. This will result in any unsaved information being lost, so please make sure you save what you are doing regularly. Once you've finished, your details and information will be saved on the system for any future applications – of course, you can edit your details at any point.

When you apply to the Environment Agency for a job we will ask you to provide your personal data on our application form. We need this information so that we can establish your identity and your right to work in the UK. You can read our Data Protection Statement on the application process page of our recruitment system. It is also available for reference on each page of the actual application.

### Capability questions

We're keen to know what makes you right for the job you're applying for and why we should invite you for an interview. The capability questions are your chance to convince us! You should demonstrate how your skills, qualities and experience meet the requirements of the job (as described in the job advert and this candidate pack). Instead of simply telling us, show us: use real life examples of where you've used a certain skill or how you've practically applied your experience.

There's a 250 word limit per question. It's a **crucial** part of the selection process so make sure you dedicate plenty of time to completing this part of the application form. Think about what we need to know about you and what you'd bring to the role and our organisation.

## How to prepare your answers for a capability based application

Capabilities are high level descriptions of key behaviours, skills and knowledge that underpin effective performance. They are the behaviours, skills and knowledge employees must have, or must acquire, to achieve high levels of performance. Please refer to the **Top Capabilities** document (attached to the vacancy) that describes our capability framework in further detail.

Capability questions target a specific skill, so we will be looking for some key components in your answer:

- an indication that **you** understand the importance of that capability to the role for which you have applied
- evidence that **you** understand the fundamental skills associated with that capability
- an **example** that highlights your possession of that capability
- an awareness from **you** of how the critical skills will be used to good effect in the new role

### The STAR approach

STAR stands for:

- **S**ituation
- **T**ask
- **A**ction
- **R**esult

The STAR approach is a universally-recognised communication technique designed to enable you to provide a meaningful and complete answer to questions asking for examples and it has the advantage of being simple.

#### Step 1 – Situation or Task

Describe the situation that you were confronted with or the task that needed to be accomplished. With the STAR approach you need to set the context. Make it concise and informative, concentrating solely on what is useful to the story. For example, if the question is asking you to describe a situation where you had to deal with a difficult person, explain how you came to meet that person and why they were being difficult. If the question is asking for an example of teamwork, explain the task that you had to undertake as a team.

#### Step 2 – Action

This is the most important section of the STAR approach as it is where you will need to demonstrate and highlight the skills and personal attributes that the question is testing. Now that you have set the context of your story, you need to explain what **you** did. In doing so, you will need to remember the following:

1. Talk about yourself, not the rest of the team
2. Go into detail
3. Steer clear of technical information, unless it is crucial to your story
4. Explain **what** you did, **how** you did it, and **why** you did it

## What, how and why

When we shortlist your application, we would like to know how you reacted to the situation. This is where you can start selling your skills. For example, you may want to describe how you used the team to achieve what you wanted and how you used your communication skills to keep everyone updated on progress, etc.

This is probably the most crucial part of your answer. We want to know that you are using a variety of transferrable skills in order to achieve your objectives. You must be able to demonstrate in your answer that you took specific actions because you were trying to achieve what you wanted, and that things didn't happen simply by chance.

When discussing a situation where you had to deal with conflict, a good answer might provide an example of how you intervened to diffuse the situation, how you approached it with consideration for both yourself and others. For example:

*"I could sense that my colleague was irritated and I asked him gently to tell me what he felt the problem was. By allowing him to vent his feelings and his anger, I gave him the opportunity to calm down. I then explained to him my own point of view on the matter, emphasising how important it was that we found a solution that suited us both."*

This answer helps us understand what drove your actions and reinforces the feeling that you are considering the needs of others before acting. It provides much more information about you as an individual and is another reason why the STAR approach is so useful.

## Step 3 – Result

Explain the positive outcome of your action(s) – how it all ended. Use the opportunity to describe what you **accomplished** and what you **learnt** in that situation. This helps you make the answer personal and enables you to highlight further skills.

## An example

For example, a strong answer to this capability question might be constructed in the following way:

"Can you tell us of an occasion when you demonstrated strong leadership in order to produce a positive outcome?"

1. Consider an introductory sentence or two about the importance of strong leadership in general terms.
2. Explain what strong leadership looks like to you. Make this personal to you; express an opinion on leadership rather than regurgitate leadership theory.
3. Talk about how you exhibited strong leadership. Draw upon a couple of real life examples which shows good evidence that you have the skills that you say you do.
4. Don't dwell too much on the details of the situation – word count (and time in interviews) is limited; we want to hear about what you did and how you contributed, added value, and drew on your skills, and how your leadership intervention was critical.
5. Discuss how these skills would transfer to the new position you are applying for.

The key in answering all capability questions is that you are required to **demonstrate** that you have the right skills by using an example (or examples) based on your work or life experience, and not just talk about the topic in a theoretical, general or impersonal manner.

## How are capability answers scored?

Answers are scored on scale of one to seven, with seven being the highest score:

Score	Category	Comment
1	Not demonstrated	No positive evidence
2	Minimal demonstration	Limited positive evidence
3	Moderate demonstration	Moderate positive evidence
4	Acceptable demonstration	Adequate positive evidence
5	Good demonstration	Substantial positive evidence
6	Strong demonstration	Substantial, positive evidence of the capability and includes some evidence of exceeding expectations
7	Outstanding demonstration	Evidence provided wholly exceeds expectation at this level

The minimum benchmark score for each answer is four, but to stand out from the crowd you should be aiming for a score of five or above.

It should be noted that the score is cumulative. This means that if an application is scored over three capability questions, the minimum score needed to be considered for interview will be 12 (three times four). If you score highly on two of the capabilities but poorly on the third, you may still pass the minimum benchmark score of 12.

## How we shortlist

We will shortlist your application based on the information you've provided in your application form. If you choose to attach your CV (this is not necessary), please note that your **CV is not visible to us at the shortlisting stage**.

## Application questions

For some roles, we'll ask you some specific questions, like if you have a preferred work location. If you're disabled and you'd like to be part of our Guaranteed Interview Scheme, you can add this information in here.

## Equality and diversity

We're committed to reflecting the communities we serve and we'd like you to tell us about yourself and your background.

## Submitting your application

Once you've filled out and completed everything, you'll be prompted to submit your application. Simply click the button and you're done. If, at any stage, you have questions or problems with our online application system, please contact SSCL on 0345 300 1861.

Don't leave your application until the last minute – technical support is provided Monday to Friday only; and most vacancies close at 23:55 in the evening. If you are unable to submit your application at 23:54 on the day applications close, we will be **unable to accept late submissions**.

## Sign up for job alerts

You can set up email alerts for future vacancies and will automatically receive an email when a job that matches your criteria becomes available. To do this simply login then click on **'create a new job alert'**, enter your job criteria and save.

