

December 2024

Hints and tips on completing your application form

The legal intern position at Friends of the Earth is a popular role, and we receive a lot of applications. We have prepared this hints and tips document, as we would like each applicant to be able to put in their strongest application, that does themselves justice. We hope you find this guide helpful – and good luck with your application!

1. Applications will be scored using the criteria in the person specification. We use this scoring to decide who to shortlist for interview. Make sure you address all of the essential criteria and, as far as you are able, the desirable criteria. There are marks for each of these criteria, so if you miss one out you will be missing out on marks. If you do not address one or more of the essential criteria in particular, you will struggle to be shortlisted for interview. So do make sure to cover them all.
2. Read the application form and job description carefully. Answer the specific questions you are being asked. It is important not to just copy and paste from other application forms – it is obvious when that is done, and it will often mean low scores. Tailor your application to this specific role.
3. Remember to give examples and case studies to back up your answers. This is your opportunity to show us why you want this role and why you are right for it. We are therefore more interested in what *you* did in the examples you give, rather than what was collectively/generally achieved by a group/entity which included you in it.

A good approach is the 'STAR' method. This gives a straightforward format to structure any examples you give. 'STAR' stands for:

- Situation: Set the scene and give the necessary details of your example.
 - Task: Describe what your responsibility was in that situation.
 - Action: Explain exactly what steps you took to address it (this is the most important part).
 - Result: Share what outcomes your actions achieved.
4. Proof-read your application form for typos and general readability. It often helps to complete a first draft, leave it for a day or so, and come back to it fresh for proofreading. It can also help to ask someone else to proofread for typos and general readability.
 5. When we consider application forms, we will not see any of your personal data. Nor will we see the name of the university you studied at. It will not gain you any points if you mention your university in your answers, even if it happens to be a very prestigious one.
 6. We suggest you use no more than 50 words for each box in the Work History section. Please do not use that section to tell us about your skills, as you have the opportunity to do so later in the form. Nor do you need to go into detail about the organisations you refer to – you should keep that brief.

7. When answering the questions about your suitability for the role and your motivation to join Friends of the Earth, avoid repetition but also avoid very brief answers, as they are unlikely to contain enough evidence that you meet the criteria being assessed.
8. When answering these sections, we suggest you aim for between 750 and 1,000 words each.
9. This is a graduate level role (in other words, for those leaving university). This means candidates need not have a huge amount of practical or legal experience to apply. We are interested in your potential. As such, if you have experience from non-legal roles, do not assume that this is not relevant. You can draw on this experience when giving examples of why you meet the criteria in the personal specification.

Good luck!