

Guide for applicants for positions at Women's Legal Service NSW

The information contained in this document has been prepared to provide assistance in preparing applications for vacant positions within Women's Legal Service NSW.

1. Choosing the best person

Appointment to positions in Women's Legal Service NSW is on the basis of merit. 'Merit' is decided with reference to the nature of the duties of the position and the abilities, qualifications, experience, standard of work performance and personal qualities of an applicant, only as they are relevant to the position.

The selection process is governed by Equal Opportunity Principles. Fair and open competition applies to every advertised position within Women's Legal Service NSW.

WLS NSW considers that being a woman or being an Aboriginal woman are genuine occupational qualifications under s.14 and 31 of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW). Position descriptions and job advertisements will clearly identify this.

2. Applying for the position

You will need to apply in writing. Your job application determines whether you will get an interview. It is your opportunity to show the selection panel that you have the knowledge, skills, experience and ability to do the job.

You should take the following steps when preparing your application:-

- Read the job advertisement, job description and selection criteria;
- Visit www.wlsnsw.org.au for information about our organisation and what we do. Annual reports are available for download;
- Write your cover letter addressing all of the selection criteria. This should clearly and concisely address each selection criterion set out in the job specification and the common selection criteria. Show how your skills, qualifications, abilities and training are relevant;

Applicants who do not address all of the criteria may not be called for an interview.

- Attach your resume. Attach to your application a brief resume with details of your skills, education and employment history. If you have gained skills or experience outside of work or overseas include them in your resume.
- Name two referees. Include the names and phone numbers of at least two referees who can comment on your work performance or provide personal references.
- Send your application. Ensure that your application reaches the address specified in the advertisement by the stated closing date and time. Applications may be posted or emailed.

We may accept late applications only if we are advised prior to the closing date that an application is being forwarded. Late applications are not considered after the shortlisting of candidates for interview.



3. The Selection Process

The Selection Panel

A Selection Panel carries out selection of applicants, usually two internal representatives and one external representative. Short term and locum appointments may be selected by internal representatives only, or by the Principal Solicitor/Executive Officer. The Panel is responsible for selecting the applicant who best satisfies the selection criteria.

Consideration of written application

The Panel will examine your written application to see how well you meet the selection criteria. Based on your written application, you may be selected to attend an interview.

Interview

- We will make our best endeavours to interview at a time and date that suits you, and to give you sufficient notice to make arrangements to attend. If you live outside Sydney we may arrange to interview you by audio- or video-conference.
- If you have any special requirements (e.g. disabled parking, wheelchair access, sign language interpreter), tell the contact person so that appropriate arrangements can be made.
- The Selection Panel will ask you questions related to the selection criteria.
- You may be asked to bring samples of your work to the interview.
- If you are unable to attend the interview at the appointment time, it may be possible to organise an alternative time, but this is subject to the availability of the Selection Panel members.
- You will have the opportunity to ask questions, giving the chance to demonstrate your interest in and understanding of the position and its duties.
- If you already work in the organisation, don't assume that internal representatives of the panel will be fully aware of your background. Stress the relevance of your qualifications and experience to the position for which you are applying.
- You may present the Panel with any appropriate papers concerning qualifications and relevant previous work, but do not overload the Panel with documentation.

Referees reports

The view of referees may be obtained for applicants being given final consideration for appointment. Where this is done, the Convenor of the Selection Panel will contact the referees nominated by the candidate. The Convenor will ask similar and specific job-related questions of each referee.

The Selection Panel's Decision

The selection panel makes a decision based on information gained from your written application, interview, referee reports and any other methods of assessment, if used. If no applicant meets the minimum criteria specified in the selection criteria the Panel will recommend that the position be re-advertised.

What happens next?

If you are selected for the job, you will be contacted by Women's Legal Service NSW with a job offer, usually within 10 days of the interview. If you accept the job, the offer will be confirmed in writing. Women's Legal Services applies a three (3) month probation period to all positions in the service.

If there is a competitive field and more than one candidate is eligible for the position, the selection panel may establish an eligibility list for the position. This means that if in the next 6 months the position becomes vacant again, WLS may offer the position to a candidate on the eligibility list.

If your application is unsuccessful, you will be notified in writing usually within 14 days of the interview, after the successful candidate has accepted the offer.

Unsuccessful applicants may request a post selection discussion with the Convenor of the Selection Panel. This can help you understand the Panel's decision and to discuss ways that you can improve your application or interview performance when you next apply.