Guide to Completing the PAL Application

How to Complete the Application Form

The application form will have several sections you are required to complete.

- Please fill in the contact details and personal information **with care**.
- You should read the **job description** and **the information on the qualities and skills required** in detail before you start. This is to help you understand what the role is and to enable you to include examples of any relevant previous experience in the application form.
- We score applications based **only** on the information **in** your answers.
- **Never assume** the person reading your application will know your capabilities and experience.
- **Proof read** the entire application form – check your spelling, grammar, and content.

Role-specific Questions

Staff will score your application based on the quality of your answers.

- You must therefore **provide detailed and personal examples** to support your answers.
- Always **back up your statements**/information with examples from your own life.
- **Examples can include**: previous work experience; volunteering; course placements; group work; societies; sports or other activities; school; personal challenges including care.
- Be clear in each example **how** it relates to the question.
- Quality over quantity – you don't have to write an essay for each answer.
  Bullet points are fine - just remember to back up your statements with real-life examples.

STAR Technique

To help write concise answers, consider using the STAR technique:

S – **Situation** – Describe the event or situation you were in

T – **Task** – Explain the task you had to complete

A – **Action** – Describe the specific actions you took to complete the task

R – **Result** – Discuss the result/outcome of your effort.

Additional support

You can get further advice and guidance on Applications, the STAR technique and using action words and phrases, in the **Careers Toolkit** (Infohub login required).

You can also **book an appointment** to talk with a Careers Adviser in person or on the phone.

For alternative format requests, please contact the PAL Team at pal@uwe.ac.uk or call us on 0117 32 87748.

Guidance on how to answer the role-specific questions

Q1: Why do you want to be a PAL Leader? (Suggested word count 100-150 words)

We are interested in what has motivated you to apply, and what you would like to gain from the role.

Bad Answer – e.g. "I want to help other students build their confidence."

- o   Only half the question answered i.e. only motivation provided.
- o   Response not linked to PAL role i.e. no reference to facilitation/ mentoring.
- o   Very brief explanation i.e. suggested word count not taken into consideration.

Good Answer –

- o   Explains both motivation AND what you hope to gain.
- o   Response is appropriate to PAL context, is logical and comprehensive.

Q2: What would make you an effective PAL Leader?

Please demonstrate the following four qualities (suggested word count: 100-150 words)

- ▪   Empathy
- ▪   Resilience
- ▪   Enthusiasm
- ▪   Reliability

Please demonstrate the following four skills and experience (suggested word count: 100-150 words)

- ▪   Good listening and communication skills
- ▪   Experience of supporting and helping thers
- ▪   Initiative and resourcefulness
- ▪   Effective self-organisational and time management skills

Bad Answer -

- o   No reference or very little reference made to having developed or wanting to develop the qualities and skills listed in the question.

- o Response is not supported with evidence i.e. examples.
- o Applicant does not take advantage of the suggested word count.

Good Answer -

- o Covers all FOUR of the personal qualities AND skills.
- o An example is provided for each quality and skill listed in the question.
- o Applicant has organised response around the STAR technique.

> Q3: As with any role, you may be faced with challenges. Identify one potential challenge as a PAL Leader and explain the steps you would take to overcome it. (Suggested word count: 100-150 words)

Bad answer –

- o No mention of a solution i.e. only half the question answered.
- o Problem/solution not viable or relevant to peer support context at all.
- o Challenge and solution explained but response is limited or illogical.

Good Answer –

- o Explains the what, why and how.
- o Challenge and solution are appropriate to PAL context.
- o Solution involves more than one viable step.