

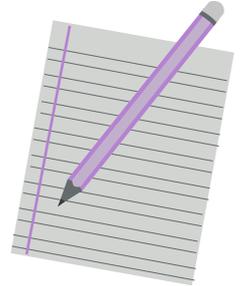


CAREERS

ADDRESSING SELECTION CRITERIA

What are Selection Criteria?

Selection Criteria summarise the key requirements of a vacancy. In the public sector, education and the not-for-profit sectors applicants are expected to submit a Statement of Claims against the selection criteria in order to be considered for an interview; this may be in addition to your resume and cover letter. Generally in the private sector, applicants address their claims more briefly in the cover letter or online form.



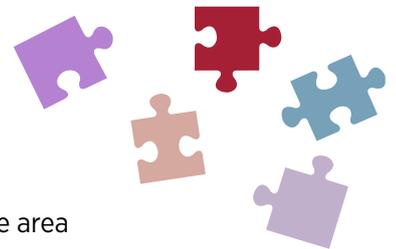
Selection Criteria answers are a more in-depth explanation of your resume content

Why do applicants need to address the Selection Criteria?

Employers request that applicants address the criteria for vacancies so that they can compare each applicant against the same set of requirements. This increases the likelihood that there will be an objective choice about the shortlist of applicants to be invited for the next stage of the recruitment process. You must address the selection criteria if asked to do so. Do not expect the employer to find the relevant information from your resume.

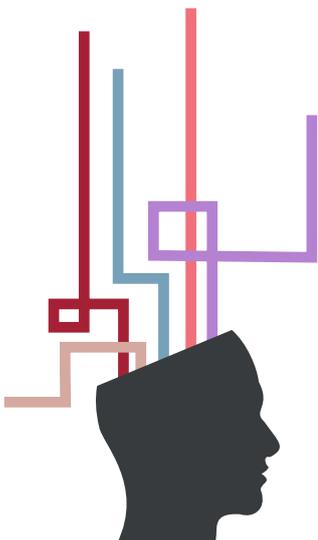
Common graduate selection criteria include:

- ✓ Problem solving skills
- ✓ Teamwork skills
- ✓ Communication skills
- ✓ Leadership skills
- ✓ Organisational skills
- ✓ Time management skills
- ✓ Customer focus
- ✓ Technical skills
- ✓ Specific knowledge area



Tips on how to address selection criteria

- ✓ List each criterion on a separate page then brainstorm 2-4 recent examples of how you demonstrate the skills described in each criterion
- ✓ Draw on a range of experiences E.g. study, paid work, community activities
 - ✓ Select your **BEST** examples of how you managed situations
 - ✓ Use the STAR technique to format your responses (see next page)
 - ✓ Use an active voice ('I developed skills in... at...')
- ✓ Keep the tone positive (avoid negative words 'lack of experience', 'never')
 - ✓ Focus on your contribution if it was part of a team effort ('I' not 'we')
- ✓ Compare your experience to the criteria, not other applicants ('I have experience in...from my role at...' rather than 'I am the best applicant for this role')
 - ✗ Do not simply restate criterion ('I have excellent communication skills')
 - ✗ Do not write a theoretical response ('Teamwork is very important because...')
 - ✗ Do not write 'as above' or 'refer to my resume' or leave a blank for any criterion
- ✓ Proof read and ensure there are no spelling, typographical or grammar errors





The STAR Technique

Your response to each criterion should draw on examples from a range of your experiences which demonstrate your skills. To do this effectively, you should outline a short 'story'. Format your story (your response) using the STAR technique:

- S** = Situation - Context: who, where, what (approx. 1 sentence)
- T** = Task - Problem or issue you were solving (approx. 1 sentence)
- A** = Activity - Steps or strategies used to solve the problem (3-4 sentences)
- R** = Result - Outcome of the situation, what you learnt (approx. 1 sentence)



To tell your story, you may select examples from your study, student societies, work, volunteer, community or sporting experience. You could also draw upon any other engaged activity that demonstrates your transferable skills such as a gap year, travelling, study exchange program, mentoring program or any other community activity where you have had responsibilities and a commitment over a period of time.

Be confident about using examples of your university experience. It is acceptable to write about your degree-specific skills developed as a part of projects, case studies, capstone units, internships, placements and assignments. Referring to university examples is particularly important if you don't have relevant work-related experience.



Ensure your examples are **specific** and the **most relevant** to show how you meet each criterion. Indicate the complexity of the task and how you managed it. Use active verbs to describe your skills e.g. managed, researched, coordinated, liaised.

Often there are multiple aspects within a selection criterion (e.g. verbal and written communication skills). You must address each aspect by outlining your range and depth of experience, using a STAR technique example as evidence for each part of the criterion. You may use bullet points within your paragraph if you are listing a range of experiences such as the types of written documents you have produced or the databases with which you are competent.



The following pages provide example responses that have been rated from 1 (lowest rating) to 4 (highest rating). This is a guide to demonstrate the level of detail required.



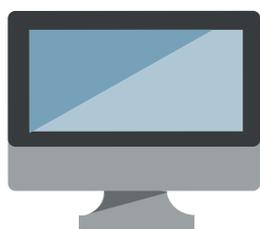
NOTE: There may be some criteria which require only brief responses e.g. "Must have completed a degree in Civil Engineering".

Further Online Resources

Detailed tips on Addressing Selection Criteria:
[Selection Criteria module on Career vUWS](#)

Tips for improving your workplace skills:
<http://www.mindtools.com/fulltoolkit.htm>

How to apply for jobs in the Australian Public Service:
http://www.apsc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/6379/crackingthecode.pdf





Sample Criterion: Effective Communication Skills - Written and Verbal

1

I have good communication skills - written and verbal. Refer to my resume for detail.

A response like this would attract a rating of 1 out of a possible 4 as it provides no information and does not give an example. There is no link between your experience and the selection criterion.

2

I have developed my communication skills through university in my B Business and Commerce (Marketing) studies and my job at Target. I am a confident presenter, capable of clearly conveying key messages to the target audience. I write well, and have achieved a credit average at university. I have received positive feedback from my manager at Target regarding my ability to interact with customers and resolve issues.

A response like this would attract a rating of 2 out of a possible 4 as it provides minimal information and a non-specific example. There is no link between your experience and the selection criterion.

3

I have developed my communication skills through university in my B Business and Commerce (Marketing) studies. I have effective verbal communication skills as evidenced by my role in the debating society on campus and presentations in tutorials. I participated in 4 debates last semester and was on a winning team for the NSW finals against other universities. My tutorial presentation on 'First Impressions, Lasting Impressions' for a senior Marketing unit attracted a High Distinction and very positive feedback from the academic. I tutor 4 high school students in Year 9 and 10 English and Maths, demonstrating a clarity of instruction and coaching.

My written communication skills are also advanced. Apart from multiple essays at university, I have prepared business and marketing plans for 'dummy' companies. I can write in a variety of formats for different target audiences e.g. media releases and submissions for funding for my local community centre. I keep current monthly reports in my role at Target.

A response like this would attract a rating of 3 out of a possible 4 as it provides moderate information, some (non-specific) examples. It loosely links your experience to the selection criterion.

4

I have proven communication skills, both verbal and written. I am a confident presenter, preparing and delivering 20 talks on a range of topics for my local Toastmasters club for the last three years. I enjoy all aspects of presenting, such as researching the topic, selecting key material, conveying the information creatively and engaging the target audience. My communication skills have been further developed during my studies in Marketing and Public Relations at university. I have convened complex strategic planning meetings with over 6 key stakeholders for a medium sized PR firm, which worked in partnership with the academic coordinator to assist the firm to improve their market reach in the resources industry. My skills in liaison and negotiation lead to a clearer strategic plan, which was accepted by the Director with only minor amendments.

A recent example of my written communication skills includes the preparation of a comprehensive business case for a 2nd year unit of study. This required a detailed analysis and report on the need to relocate a not-for-profit organisation from North Sydney to Greater Western Sydney last semester. This was a team assignment. My research and section of the report focused on the logistics of the relocation and the identification of the key risk factors. I edited the team's final report before submission and ensured a consistency of 'voice' and formatting, including multiple charts, tables and images. I also further developed my skills in research, minute-taking at meetings and survey design and analysis. I received a Distinction for this report from my academic supervisor and a comment that my written skills were impressive.

A response like this would attract a rating of 4 out of a possible 4 as it substantial information and detailed specific examples. It clearly links experience to the selection criterion using the STAR technique.



Sample Criterion: Proven Teamwork Skills

1

I have good teamwork skills. I play soccer and I work in a team at Target. People like me.

A response like this would attract a rating of 1 out of a possible 4 as it provides no information and does not give an example. There is no link between your experience and the selection criterion.

2

Apart from team work at university in group assignments, I have been very involved with my soccer club for the last 5 years. As a player, I value the varying strengths that each person brings to the team and how the team needs to assign positions (roles) for the greater good of the team. As a coach for the under 17s, I understand the balance a team must work on between skill development and team motivation to achieve goals. I enjoy working in teams for university assignments. My most recent group assignment involved preparing a performance piece on management theories. It was fun and I thought I did a great job in that assignment.

A response like this would attract a rating of 2 out of a possible 4 as it provides minimal information and a non-specific example. There is no link between your experience and the selection criterion.

3

I understand the importance of teamwork as I have been both a team member and a team leader with group assignments at university. During my last team assignment at university for a research project on management theories, I helped the team get back on track after we had several unproductive meetings and missed a key deadline. I suggested we each write down the project goals, key deliverables and due dates. I asked team members to clarify their motivations and strengths that they felt they were bringing to the team. This strategy was highly effective as we identified the problem areas and miscommunication, and we were able to refocus our efforts to achieve results quickly. We ended up producing a report before the due date, had plenty of time to practise our presentation and agreed it was our best team effort this year.

A response like this would attract a rating of 3 out of a possible 4 as it provides moderate information, some (non-specific) examples. It loosely links your experience to the selection criterion.

4

I pride myself on helping teams to achieve goals and to enjoy the experience of working together. I have been involved in many group assignments at university and my team skills have been further developed as a soccer player and coach (5 years) as well as in my customer service role at Target (3 years). In any team, I find myself taking on the role of motivator and coach, supporting others to find their strengths and to contribute effectively.

My most recent example was a group assignment for a Social Research unit with 5 students. The project involved writing a performance piece to creatively illustrate apartheid and the impact of segregation on the community. The performance needed to be suitable for high school groups. After researching key information, the team took some time to set goals and to determine the best way to present the topic to our target audience from the many options we brainstormed. I took a lead role with the group on the decision-making process after we had two unproductive meetings. I suggested we develop decision-making criteria and a voting system to make our key decisions. This helped progress the planning stages significantly and most of the creative input and time management aspects of the assignment fell into place fairly quickly from this point. I developed confidence in helping guide the team to deliver a final product on time and to a high standard. We received a standing ovation at each of the four performances to year 9 classes at the local high school and a Distinction for this assignment.

A response like this would attract a rating of 4 out of a possible 4 as it substantial information and detailed specific examples. It clearly links experience to the selection criterion using the STAR technique.