

# Advice to applicants

So, you're considering HomeStart as a place you would like to work?

Whether it's your first time in applying for a role, or you've done this many times, we would like to help you on your way in securing the next step in your career.

Your application is an opportunity for you to share with HomeStart how your skills and experience can successfully fulfil the requirements of a particular role.

We can't stress enough the importance of addressing in your application what has been asked of you in the advertisement. We recommend that you:

- Answer any targeted questions, where relevant, before you submit your application.
- Remember, first impressions count! Make sure your cover letter and resume is well formatted and is clear of any spelling mistakes.
- Don't be afraid to share with us what you enjoy doing outside of work – maybe you volunteer your time with a community group, play a sport or are in training to complete a marathon. Amongst other things, this shows us that you enjoy a well-balanced lifestyle.

Different roles will have varying requirements, however a merit-based selection process that is open, competitive and free of bias, unlawful discrimination, nepotism and patronage is always used.

Our recruitment process may include:

- An assessment of your application.
- A phone interview.
- A face-to-face interview.
- Referee checks.
- Screening checks (e.g. Pre-Employment Declaration, National Police Certificate, bankruptcy check).
- Psychometric testing.
- Presentations or written exercises.

Should you wish to disclose a disability or medical condition so consideration may be given to any reasonable adjustments to the assessment process, please advise the nominated HomeStart representative (refer to the advertisement for a name and contact details). HomeStart is an equal opportunity employer, and we will endeavour to meet your needs.

As the purpose of any recruitment is to identify the person best suited to the role and the needs of HomeStart, not all applicants will progress through all of the recruitment stages.

Here is a general guide to the stages of the process.

## 1. Application

- Carefully read the advertisement to determine if the role is right for you.
- Check that you have the necessary qualifications, experience, skills and abilities required.
- Address any requirements of the role in your cover letter.
- Your cover letter should describe how your skills and experience address the requirements of the role you are applying for.
- Ensure you send us your up-to-date resume.
- Some roles that we advertise may require you to respond to open-ended or 'targeted' questions during the application process, we strongly recommend you give some considered thought to these responses.

Complete your application and submit all supporting documentation by the closing date and time as per the instructions in the advertisement. Late applications may be accepted in some circumstances – please discuss any late applications with the nominated HomeStart representative.

## Resources

There are a lot of online resources available to help you develop your application and some helpful tips when it comes time for an interview. Below is some important information to get you started:

- [How can you put your skills to work?](#)
- [Find the right job for me](#)
- [Improve my resume](#)
- [Career change advice](#)
- [A Candidates guide to Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) in recruitment](#) (refer to page 3 for more information)

## 2. Initial shortlisting

Your application will be reviewed against the requirements of the role to determine if your application will progress to the next stage. This stage is referred to as shortlisting.

## 3. After initial shortlisting

If you are successful at the shortlisting stage of the process, a more formal assessment of your application may be made. This may include a telephone interview, online testing, sample work tasks such as case studies, writing assignments, role plays etc. Some assessment activities may have time restrictions and likely to include reading from a computer screen or paper.

If you have a disability and require an adjustment to be made to the assessment process, please inform the nominated HomeStart representative.

## 4. Interview

The interview will generally be conducted in person by a panel of two or more HomeStart representatives who will ask behaviour-based questions designed to enable you to demonstrate how you have fulfilled the requirements of the role from your experience.

Some panels will ask 'scenario' based questions where they pose a likely situation to you and ask how you would respond in that situation.

You can prepare for the interview by reviewing the requirements of the role (qualifications, experience, and knowledge) and reflecting on how you've demonstrated these requirements in the workplace or through studies that you may have undertaken. Sometimes, interviews might be conducted by video conferencing such as MS Teams. As mentioned earlier, first impressions count and dressing appropriately for an interview is one of these occasions!

## 5. Referee checks

You will be required to nominate three (3) referees in your application. One should include a current or recent line/people leader. If you have not nominated your current/line people leader, the panel may, subject to advising you, contact the people leader or other referees that the panel believe are relevant. Sometimes it might be appropriate to conduct a reference check outside of nominated referees. Although the candidate's permission is not required, we will try to advise you of this decision.

If you are successful in progressing to this stage of the recruitment process, your nominated referees will be contacted to provide evidence of your past behaviour, knowledge, values and skills. If referee checks are satisfactory, your application may progress to the next stage. We strongly recommend you let your referees know that you have applied for a position (and what the position entails) and that they may receive a call from HomeStart.

## 6. Screening checks

If you are the successful candidate, prior to commencement, you will be required to complete a Pre-Employment Declaration outlining your suitability, eligibility and capacity to undertake the functions of the role you applied for in the South Australian public sector.

The following screening checks may also be conducted, depending on the requirements of the role:

- Medical and functional capacity assessment.
- Relevant criminal screening checks.
- Registration with the relevant professional body.
- Education qualification check.
- Citizen or residency status or visa check.
- Re-employment eligibility checks (within the public sector).

All pre-employment checks must be satisfactory before you can commence employment.

If successful, you may be offered the role verbally, followed by a written offer soon after.

## Eligibility

The South Australian public sector is committed to employment practices that are fair, responsive and inclusive.

Australian citizens, permanent residents and non-Australian citizens are eligible to apply. If you are a visa holder – whether it be temporary, provisional or permanent – it must be valid and permit you to work in Australia.

Applicants can check their work rights using **Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO)**.

## Timeframes

Given the high number of applications received for some roles, the time for recruitment does vary.

## More information

If you require more information about the role you are applying for, or the application process, please contact the nominated HomeStart representative listed on the job advertisement.

## Privacy collection statement

HomeStart collects your personal information so that we may assess your application for employment. If you do not provide the information requested by HomeStart, we may be unable to progress your application.

In order to assess your suitability for employment, we may contact referees nominated by you in your application and disclose your personal information. The information disclosed will be strictly limited to what is required to assess your suitability for employment with us. We are not likely to disclose your personal information to overseas recipients.

HomeStart's Privacy Policy contains information about how you may:

- Access your personal information that is held by HomeStart;
- Seek correction of your personal information that is held by HomeStart; and
- Complain about a breach by HomeStart of the Australian Privacy Principles and how we will deal with such a complaint.

Please contact [careers@homestart.com.au](mailto:careers@homestart.com.au) if you have any queries or requests in relation to the Privacy Act.

# A Candidates guide to Artificial Intelligence (AI) in recruitment

## Artificial Intelligence and recruitment

Artificial Intelligence (AI) software such as ChatGPT, Claude, Copilot and Gemini are powerful tools that can create and review text in ways that mimic what people can do.

These tools can help you enhance your application and prepare for the process but it is essential you use them appropriately. They must not be used to provide misleading or false information at any stage of the application journey.

This guidance focuses on acceptable and unacceptable uses of AI in the application process. It also suggests ways to use it that may be helpful to you.

The most important thing to remember is that we want to find out about you and how you align with HomeStart. Your application should represent your skills and personal experiences accurately and authentically. Good applications help us understand:

- How your skills and experience align with the role you are applying to.
- What motivates you to do your best work.
- What you have achieved and how you did it.

The two main parts of the process are the written application and interview stages. In each stage there are different things that AI might help you with.

The goal of using AI in your job application is to help you show us who you are and what you are good at. It's not about creating a persona that isn't you.

## Writing your application

Acceptable use	Unacceptable use
<p>You can use AI in the application process to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help you refine and clarify your ideas and thoughts.</li><li>• Research public information about HomeStart.</li><li>• Find out information about trends in industries or professions that you can relate to personal experiences.</li><li>• Check the spelling, grammar and clarity of what you have written.</li></ul>	<p>Do not use AI to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inflate or invent your skills and experiences.</li><li>• Create generic responses and copy these into your application.</li><li>• Complete assessments that evaluate personality and abilities such as situational judgement and numerical tests.</li><li>• Provide an AI tool with sensitive information about your employer such as figures or personal details.</li></ul>

There are several ways that AI can improve the clarity and quality of your written application and remain an honest reflection of your skills and experience. Examples of effective use include:

- Thinking about your own personal leadership experiences and ask AI to help you improve how you present them.
- Asking AI to summarise public information about important projects or policies, in the organisation you are applying to, that you can think about in your responses.
- Asking AI to help identify relevant skills in the job advert and then think about how you've demonstrated these skills in previous roles as you prepare your responses.
- Writing a list of examples with details of how you relate your experience and skills to the role, then ask AI to help you structure them using the Situation, Task, Action and Result (STAR) format or other ways to strengthen your examples.
- Asking AI to check your answers are concise and recommend improvements that maintain their meaning.

## Preparing for your interview

Acceptable use	Unacceptable use
<p>You can use AI tools to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare for interviews, including mock questions you might be asked.</li><li>• Research public information about HomeStart.</li><li>• Find out information about trends in an industry or profession that you can relate to personal experiences.</li></ul>	<p>Do not use AI to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inflate or invent your skills and experiences.</li><li>• Create answers for questions you are asked during a live or pre-recorded interview.</li><li>• Create answers for situation-based questions.</li><li>• Provide an AI tool with sensitive information about your employer such as figures or personal details.</li></ul>

If you are invited to an interview with HomeStart, AI can help you prepare and practice beforehand. Some examples of effective use:

- You could ask AI to read the job description and create mock interview questions to help you prepare example responses based on your experiences and skills.
- Ask AI to generate sample behaviour questions so you can practice how you deliver your responses.
- Compare your responses to example questions with recommended approaches and personalise them.
- Ask for tips on body language and communication styles for interviews, and practise these in mock sessions.

**It's important to understand that while AI can help you prepare for an interview, AI must not be used to produce responses during an interview.**

## Why authenticity is important

Your application and interview should give us an accurate and authentic picture of your skills and experiences. It is vital that you do not use AI during any live assessments at any stage of the selection process. This ensures a fair selection process for all candidates where we assess everyone based on merit.

All public sector employees follow the Code of Ethics for the SA Public Sector, and we are looking for talented candidates who resonate with our core values. Authenticity and honesty in your application is vital to determine whether you are a good fit for the role.

We reserve the right to reject applications where AI is used inappropriately at any stage of the process.

If you have any enquiries during any stage of the recruitment process, remember to contact the nominated HomeStart representative on the position advertisement.

We wish you the best of luck with your application!