

Living in the Blackburn and Darwen Area



Blackburn and Darwen are vibrant towns surrounded by beautiful countryside and within easy reach of Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool and Preston, the Yorkshire Dales and the Lake District.

Local population

We have over 140,000 people living in the borough and one of the largest young populations in the country (over a third are under 19.) Our borough is a rich mix of people with British, Asian, Irish, Italian and Polish heritage.

Investment

It's an exciting time to live and work here. Millions of pounds of investment has flowed and continues to flow into the borough to regenerate our town centres, refurbish buildings, improve roads and provide new facilities and opportunities for local people.

Transport

Blackburn and Darwen are at the heart of the motorway network. The M65 links to nearby towns and the M6 for the Lake District or the Midlands while the M61 and M66 motorways provide easy access to Manchester and the M62 for Yorkshire. Manchester, Blackpool and John Lennon (Liverpool) airports are all close by and London three hours away by train.

Facilities: shopping, entertainment and leisure

Over £66m is being invested in expanding and improving shopping in Blackburn town centre and £6m in our free re:fresh sports and leisure scheme.

King George's Hall, and Darwen Library Theatre host a wide range of performances by local and national artists or you can enjoy street theatre and music at our annual 'Celebrate Blackburn and Darwen Live' event.

You can go skating at Blackburn Arena which is close to the Vue cinema, the Bowlplex bowling arena and restaurant complex or enjoy our many other restaurants, parks and open spaces.

Education and childcare

The borough has a good mix of state and independent schools and superb schools for children with special needs. Our £150m Building Schools for the Future programme will see secondary schools refurbished or rebuilt from 2010 to 2014. Our two colleges provide a wide range of professional, vocational and degree qualifications up to MBA level.

Housing and accommodation

From Victorian villas and traditional terraces in the town to historic country cottages, modern new homes or converted barns on the edge of the moors, you'll find a wide range of affordably priced housing to suit all tastes across the borough.

General Information

Top performing and ambitious

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council provides more than 800 different services to people who live, work and study in the borough. The Council is officially rated as one of the top councils in the country. The Audit Commission, which checks local government performance, gave us the top rating in 2009. We are one of only 25 councils to keep this top rating since 2002. You can find out more about the Council on www.blackburn.gov.uk.

The Council has five priorities:

- Improving public health and well-being – ‘living better, living longer’
- Improving your neighbourhood - community engagement, community cohesion, environment, liveability/public realm, enforcement, community safety
- Improving the economy – delivering regeneration to tackle poverty, skills and worklessness
- Achieving first class services: influencing, enabling and commissioning
- Deliver a ‘fit for purpose’ organisation

Partnership working

We recognise that the Council alone can't tackle some of the key issues in the borough, such as keeping people healthy, keeping communities safe and tackling crime.

By working in partnership with other organisations including Lancashire Police, the NHS and local voluntary and community groups and private companies we can achieve more and tackle these key issues. We call this partnership working the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). You can find more information about the LSP on www.blackburn.gov.uk.

We're fair, equal and care for our customers

We want our workforce to reflect the wide mix (diversity) of people who live locally and we expect our staff to value the many different people who make up our borough for who they are.

Our customers are the people we come into everyday contact with inside or outside the Council and we expect the highest standards of customer care.

We aim to serve our customers, as we would wish to be served ourselves. We will be polite and positive and deliver excellent customer service.

Benefits of working for Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

We can't deliver the services and achieve the results we do without enthusiastic, hard working and happy staff.

That's why we try very hard to be a caring employer and to make sure everyone, regardless of personal circumstances, is treated fairly, equally and has the same opportunities for career development as everyone else. As the largest employer in the borough, we also try to maintain high standards of people management and make sure we obey all employment laws.

Working for the Council offers:

Flexitime

In most cases, flexible working hours will make it possible to vary your start and finish times to balance work and home life. Standard working hours are 37 per week.

Childcare

Blackburn and Darwen have a Family Information Service which provides detail of the range of services available in the Borough, this includes nurseries, children's centres, pre-schools, registered childminders, out of school clubs, parent and toddler groups, holiday activities and early years free entitlement. The Family Information Service can be contacted on 01254 667877 for further information, or via the on-line directory www.urbwd.com.

Childcare vouchers

The Council takes part in a childcare voucher scheme which saves parents money and support with finding childcare.

Local Government Pension Scheme.

The Council offers a final salary pension scheme to all employees.

Training and development opportunities

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council positively encourages and supports personal and professional development.

Staff discount scheme

Staff are able to receive staff discount in local shops and cafes.

Free sports

Access to free sports including swimming and exercise classes (under the re:refresh scheme) and discounts on gym membership.

Annual Leave

All staff are entitled to 25 days annual leave per full year, rising to 30 days after five years continuous service.

Benefits of working for Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council *continued*

Car purchase loan scheme

The Council operates a car loan scheme which is available to those designated as an essential or casual car user.

Car mileage allowance

The Council will pay car mileage allowance if you use your car for business purposes at the request of the Council.

Salary scales

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council staff are paid according to locally agreed pay grades using national spinal column points. You will receive an increment (salary increase) on April 1 each year (in addition to any national pay rise) or when you have completed six months service if appointed between October 1 and March 31 provided you are not at the top of the pay scale for your job.

Sick Pay

We pay sick pay in line with national conditions.

Interview expenses

If you live outside the borough, we will pay travelling expenses equivalent to the cost of a second class rail fare, no matter whether you come by train, car or bus/coach. If you are offered the job, but turn it down, then we will not pay expenses. Expenses will be paid when you start work.

Appointment

If you are successful, once satisfactory references have been received, we will send you a letter giving you a conditional job offer. This means certain conditions, such as medical clearance, CRB clearance (if applicable), have to be met before the job can be confirmed. You should not resign from your current job until these conditions have been met and the job offer has been confirmed.

Medical assessment

All appointments to employment with the Council are subject to the successful applicant satisfying the Council that they are medically fit for the post or able to do it with reasonable changes.

Probationary period

There is a minimum probation period of six months for all new starters with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

Guidance notes to help you apply for a job with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

In this pack you have a job description, person specification and application form. If you are applying for more than one job, you must complete a separate application form for each job.

Reading this pack carefully will help you decide whether to apply for the job. The job description lists the duties of the post. The person specification lists the essential (must have) and desirable (would help to have) knowledge, skills and qualification needed to do the job and how we will assess each of these.

Our decision to invite you for interview is based entirely on the information you give on your application. Please give us clear examples of how you meet each item under the person specification and remember we can only invite you for interview if we can clearly see you meet the essential requirements. You can add extra sheets of paper to the application form enclosed, if necessary.

Don't send a CV (curriculum vitae) we do not accept them.

Type or use black pen. Black shows best when photocopied.

Please complete the equality monitoring form. We use the information to check how effective our policies are.

Unfortunately, because we receive many applications, we can't write to everyone saying we have received your form or to let you know that you have not been successful in getting an interview on this occasion.

Good luck with your application

Do you need help with this application form?

Free, confidential help and advice is available from the centres listed below which can also help you with looking for other jobs, training or getting back into education, careers advice and preparing for job interviews.

Audley and Queen's Park Neighbourhood Learning Centre
Pringle Street, Blackburn, BB1 1SF
Tel (01254) 507720

Bank Top Neighbourhood Learning Centre
Arthur Way, Blackburn, BB1 1QP
Tel (01254) 581175

Darwen Access Point
Duckworth Street, Darwen, BB3 1AT
Tel (01254) 707551

Blackburn with Darwen Council's Employment Agency
Penny Street, Blackburn, BB1 6HQ
Tel (01254) 222548

Blackburn Town Hall Reception
King William Street, Blackburn, BB1 7DY
Between 1pm and 3pm ONLY on Fridays

If you are deaf or have sight difficulties, you can also get help from

East Lancashire Deaf Society
8 Heaton Street, Blackburn, BB2 2EF
Tel (01254) 844550

Blackburn and District Society for the Blind
1-2 Thwaites House, Railway Road, Blackburn, BB1 5AX
Tel (01254) 54143

Guidance notes for completing your application form

Post applied for

Write the full job title and the name of the department.

Name and address

Give your full name, address, postcode and telephone number (if you are on the telephone).

Education, job related qualifications and specialised training

Give details of your education, qualifications and training starting with secondary school. Include all your qualifications and any training and short courses you have attended or are completing at present (use an additional sheet if necessary).

Present/most recent appointment

If you are working please give details about your present job.

Previous employment

Please give details of all your previous jobs since leaving school/college in date order starting with the most recent. Any gaps in your employment history need to be explained. Use a separate sheet if necessary.

References

Your first referee should be your present employer. If you are not working at the moment, please give details of your last employer or your course tutor if you are a student. Where possible, your referees should be able to tell us about your ability to do the job for which you are applying. We do not accept references from friends or family.

We will always take references from your most recent employer and may ask for references from any of your previous employers as well as your second referee.

Canvassing

You can quote a councillor as a referee, but you must not ask them directly or through someone else to help you get an interview or get the job. This is called canvassing. If you are found doing this, your application will be disqualified.

Criminal convictions

Having a criminal record does not necessarily prevent you working for the Council. It depends on the type of offence you committed and the type of job you are applying for.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 says after a certain time some convictions are 'spent.' That means you do not have to tell us about those convictions.

Guidance notes for completing your application form *continued*

However, if you are applying for a job working with children or vulnerable adults, by law you must tell us about all convictions, spent or not, cautions and bind-overs and give the dates. We will also carry out a Criminal Record Bureau check (CRB check) for all posts working with children/vulnerable adults and may carry out CRB checks for other posts.

We will ask you to sign to say the information you have provided about your criminal record is true. If you do not tell us about any criminal conviction, your application will be disqualified or, if you have started work, you could be dismissed without notice. For more information about the CRB please see www.crb.gov.uk

People with disabilities

Please refer to the guidance notes for disabled/sensory impaired applicants.

Relevant skills, knowledge and experience

This is very important. It's your chance to tell us why you think you can do the job. Think carefully about relevant examples you can use from at home, school, and leisure, paid or unpaid employment to show how you meet the requirements of the person specification.

For example, if the person specification asks you to be able to communicate effectively with customers, describe the customers you have communicated with, tell us how you communicated with them and how you know this was effective.

Give clear details of your skills and tell us exactly what your responsibilities were.

Finally

Check that you have answered all the questions, sign and date the application form and make sure you put enough postage on the envelope. You don't need to put in a covering letter.

You can post forms to:

**The Recruitment Team
HR and Payroll Services
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Castleway House (first floor)
17 Preston New Road
Blackburn
BB2 1AU**

Or email the form to:

applicationform.blackburn@capita.co.uk