

# Candidate Pack

Becoming part of the PSS team

pss\*



*let's write you a new chapter...*



# Hi! Thank you for your interest in becoming a part of the PSS team.

At PSS, we've got an important job to do; and that's to help people make the most of their lives. Whether you're working directly with the people who use our services, or whether you're working behind the scenes in one of our offices, every day you'll be helping to make other people feel happier, healthier and supported.

PSS is a caring, friendly organisation - and so are PSS people. Our organisation is ran by a bunch of professional, creative, like-minded individuals, working together to change lives. When you come to work for us, it's obviously really important that you have the right skills, knowledge and experience to do the things we support proud, but it's also vital that you have the right attitude, too. We look to employ people who do the right things, in the right way. This approach to recruitment means PSS is a pretty great place to be - and we hope you can join us!

This pack is designed to help you get a feel for what it's like to work with us, find out what we're looking for, explain the recruitment process and help you decide whether you can see yourself as a part of our amazing team. Each section is crammed with hints and tips to help you make a great application, so please take the time to give it a good read.

**Good luck - we're rooting for you!**

*"Be the change you want to see in the world."*

Mahatma Ghandi

# Who are we? PSS in a nutshell...

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Our aim is simple: we want to help people change their lives for the better - no matter what life throws at them.



In 2019, we celebrated our 100th birthday - and we still look this great! We want to make sure we're around for future generations, and your work will play a part in that.



We offer lots of different services to help people get the most from their lives - from health and wellbeing through to social care services.

**The PSS team** is made up of our wonderful employees, dedicated self-employed carers, generous supporters (volunteers) and the next generation of brilliant professionals: our placement students...



Our world revolves around the people who use our services. Everyone's different, and our focus is on helping people choose their own type of support.



**We go way back:** We were founded in 1919 by Eleanor Rathbone, a lady famous for tackling social injustices.



We've got offices in **Merseyside, Wales, the Midlands, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Manchester.**

**We're always cooking up new ideas for services we can offer.**

We listen to what people tell us, and if we hear about a way we can help, we'll create a service to do just that.



**The people who use our services are the reason we do what we do** and they play a huge part in making sure we're doing things right. They help us make decisions about how our services are run.



# The PSS values and culture

We may be blowing our own trumpet, but our team really is something special.

PSS people come from all different walks of life, and it's this mix of brilliant personalities, experiences and insights that gives us that warm, open and friendly culture you can feel as soon as you meet us. But however wonderfully different we all are, there are five things we've all got in common - and they are the PSS values.

**Created by our own employees to reflect some of the personal traits PSS people have, our values are the key to what makes our culture so unique; they're a reflection of who each of us are and they're embedded in everything we do.**

Sometimes other organisations approach us and ask how we managed to make our culture so strong.

**Our answer is really simple: we employ genuine, determined, professional, open-minded and big-hearted people.**

*“Be yourself - everyone else is taken.”* Oscar Wilde

We are determined



We are big-hearted



We are open-minded



We are genuine



We are professional



So... does that sound like you? Tell us! We want to get a sense of who you are.

We're not just looking for ways you fit well into your role, we're looking for how you fit with the wider PSS team, too.

# Let's talk about racism. And then let's keep talking about it.

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We live in a world where lots of Black people, Asian people, Middle-Eastern people and other people considered to be ethnic minorities in the past, experience racism on a daily basis.

Every day in the UK and all over the world, people are being disadvantaged by, hated on, bullied about and judged by their ethnicity. That's not right, and we want to help make changes.

## The types of racism people experience

Individual racism is when someone chooses to be racist towards another person and thinks that it's right to discriminate against someone for having a different ethnicity than theirs. They might use words to talk about what they believe, calling people names, or they might behave in a way that says it all.

Systemic racism is about how our society works to benefit White people, and not benefit people of different ethnicities. White people have been in positions of political power, high up in businesses and in senior positions within communities for a very long time – and this has meant that lots of the policies, procedures and general beliefs that our whole world and society is built on have been designed to benefit White people, and nobody else, with little input from people from other ethnic backgrounds. This means that White people have lots of advantages over people who are not White, or don't have the same type of disadvantages. Because of how deeply this type of racism goes into our society, it might be difficult for White people to spot this type of racism – mostly because they've never had to deal with it. This is called White privilege.

Those are just some examples of the different ways racism exists all around us.



## Becoming an anti-racist organisation

At PSS we're against racism of all kinds. Not only will we never tolerate any kind of individual racism where we work, but we're doing all we can to make a stand against systemic racism, too, starting with how we do things at PSS.

We're working hard to become an anti-racist organisation.

What does that mean?

It means that we're doing everything we can to be as inclusive as we can. We're serious about taking a long, hard look at PSS at every level, looking at how we recruit people, how we support people, how we educate our staff and how we can raise the voices of the people we support and our team members as they have important conversations about racism and celebrate diversity. We want help all of our staff understand what White privilege means and have the space and time to take a step back and think about how racism has affected all of our lives, no-matter what our ethnicity is.

Being anti-racist is a choice you can make in your life to help make the world a better, more inclusive place. It's about doing things, however small or large, to actively speak out against racism in the world. When you apply for a role with us, we'll be asking you to agree to join us in being anti-racist in every way we can - to listen and to understand as best you can. We're going to help you recognise how racism impacts our lives, show you some of the ways you can be anti-racist in your life, and help you to see how you can play a part in changing things for the better. We've got lots of learning and development opportunities to help us be better – and we're constantly updating and tweaking them to suit our changing world. After all, just being 'not racist' isn't enough to make the world a better place – we need to rise against it together to make a change.



# Love what you do; do what you love

We think PSS is a pretty great place to work. But don't just take our word for it - here's what some of our brilliant PSS people had to say in our 2020 Staff Survey\*:

**97%**

OF PSS PEOPLE SAID THAT  
PSS WAS A FRIENDLY  
PLACE TO WORK.

‘EVERYONE IS FRIENDLY,  
EVERYONE IS THEIR  
AUTHENTIC SELF HERE.’

‘PSS IS LIKE A FAMILY.’

**97%**

OF PSS PEOPLE SAID THAT  
THEIR WORK HAD SPECIAL  
MEANING AND WAS MORE  
THAN ‘JUST A JOB’.

‘I'M PROUD TO WORK SOMEWHERE  
THAT HELPS THE PEOPLE THAT  
COULD BE LEFT BEHIND.’

‘YOU'RE NOT LOOKED DOWN  
ON FOR DIFFERENT WAYS OF  
THINKING, YOU'RE PRAISED.’

**98%**

OF PSS PEOPLE THOUGHT  
THE LEADERSHIP TEAM  
WERE EFFECTIVE AND TRUST  
THEM TO LEAD.

‘THE LEADERSHIP TEAM  
ARE ACCESSIBLE, YOU CAN  
TALK TO THEM.’

‘I'M GRATEFUL FOR THE WORK  
THAT IS DONE TO KEEP PSS ALIVE  
AND IN LINE WITH ITS VISION.’

# What else can we offer you?

Going home at the end of the day knowing you've made a difference is a lovely feeling - and so is knowing that your employer is looking after your best interests.

We can help you look after your pennies...

## Enhanced Payments

Enhanced payment entitlements aren't always guaranteed in all employments, especially in the charity sector, so we're proud to be an employer that offers this for sickness, maternity, paternity and adoption leave.

## PSS Pension Scheme and Life Insurance

Planning for your own (and your family's) future is a huge priority for most people and a workplace pension membership can be an important element of this. We have an occupational pension scheme with us matching your contribution up to 4%. Staff can also enrol into the separate PSS Pension scheme which starts at 7% employees and 8% employers. You can raise this if you want to and PSS pay 1% on top of what you contribute. Those who are members of this scheme will also receive life cover protection (1 x your annual salary) which can offer a bit of peace of mind knowing your nearest and dearest are taken care of when it matters most.

## PSS Annual Season Ticket Loan

This is a really handy one for those who travel to work by public transport. We can loan you the cost of an annual season ticket for most forms of public transport. This can save you hundreds of pounds a year and means you can pay the cost back through your salary, in regular monthly instalments. You can take advantage of this once you have completed your probation period.

## Medicash Health Plan

Everyday healthcare costs can mount up pretty quickly. Medicash has various packages and payment options available for everyday health care costs, such as dental and optical care, assessment and treatment such as physiotherapy and chiropody, as well as plans for alternative treatment such as Indian head message and Reiki.



# What else can we offer you?

## Salary Finance

We've teamed up with Salary Finance who offer free financial education including top tips to take control of your finances and become savvier when it comes to managing your pennies. Once you've completed your probation period, there's also the opportunity to open savings accounts and apply for affordable loans with payments taken directly from your salary. This can help you to create better saving habits, borrow sensibly and much more.

## PSS Savings Club

We also have our own PSS Savings Club so whether you want to save towards a holiday, home improvements, a shiny new car, a special celebration or even a rainy day fund, it's there as another hassle free option and a safe way to save and manage your money better.

## O2 Open Perks

You and two of your family or friends can get 25% off any O2 airtime tariff of 3GB of data or more and 15% off any tariff under 3GB. You can also get access to advance tickets for all O2 music venues.

## Wholesale Membership

You also have the opportunity to purchase wholesale memberships allowing you to access some of the best quality products at the lowest possible prices. With warehouses throughout the UK, you will find everything from groceries and electronics to clothing and cleaning supplies.

## Gym Discount

You can access various discounts and offers for selected gyms including large private chains, local authority leisure centres and small private gyms.

## Cycle2work Scheme

Cycling to work is a great way to save money on travel costs, get more active and look after the environment. Our scheme is provided through [Cyclescheme.co.uk](http://Cyclescheme.co.uk) and will help you save money on a bike and / or cycling accessories at well-known chains as well as local retailers. Once you have passed your probation period you can join the scheme and pay through a salary sacrifice arrangement with savings on your tax and national insurance.

## Refer a Friend

If you know someone who lives our values, you can recommend them for one of our vacancies and if they're successful, you'll receive £150 upon the completion of their probation period. That's right, we reward staff for doing what many of us do so naturally anyway...proudly talking about the work we do and what makes PSS such a great place to work.

**There are also lots of other little ways that we'll try to make a difference. This could be through wellbeing sessions, PSS activities, playful staff competitions or causes we can all support together.**

# What else can we offer you?

We can help you:

## *Look after you...*

### **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)**

Life is full of ups and downs and things can get tough for all of us sometimes. We offer a free, confidential service for you and members of your household to get professional support and advice on a range of issues; such as stress, relationship difficulties, bereavement, family difficulties, anxiety, debt, medical matters, legal advice and more. It's there if you need it.

## *Look after your weekend plans...*

### **CSSC Sport & Leisure Club**

Are you always on the hunt for something to entertain you/the kids at the weekend? We may have just the thing. CSSC is a membership scheme that you can pay into, which offers fantastic savings on a whole load of local, regional and national sporting and leisure activities, family days out, reduced price theme park/cinema/theatre tickets and thousands of discounts at high street shops.

## *Look after your career...*

### **Stay curious**

We may be (totally, utterly and completely) brilliant, but we're certainly not complacent about it. We've been around for over 100 years, and to do that, we've had to keep on learning, adapting and moving with the times to make sure the service we provide is top notch and does what it says on the tin. When you come and work with us, we'll encourage you to do the same things; learn, adapt, be brilliant. That's why we have our own in-house learning and development team who provide, manage, support and source training across the organisation. They'll find ways to help you be even better at what you do and be there to cheer you on along the way.



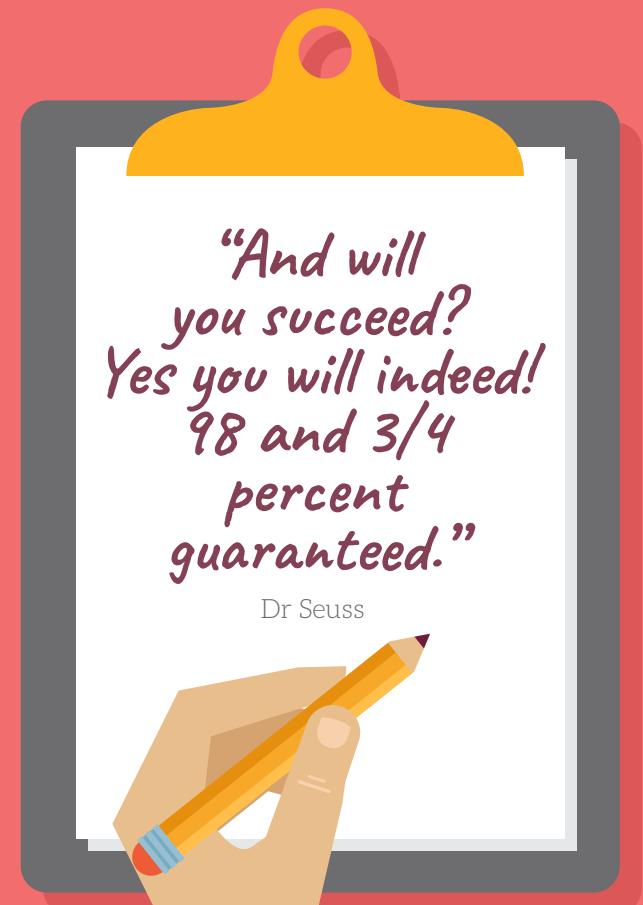
# Your application form

Well, you've read a little bit about us - now it's over to you!

If you like what you've read so far and think you can see yourself as a PSS person, it's time to fill in your application form. Your application form is an important part of the selection process; it's used to determine whether or not you'll be chosen to have an interview and also acts as a basis for the questions we'll ask you on the day. It's really important that you try to capture all of the relevant information we have asked for on the form, so we can get a good feel for who you are and why you're great.

## How to fill your form out...

- **Make sure the job title and reference is clearly stated at the beginning of your form,** so we know which job you're going for.
- **You must sign your form to confirm that the information you have given is correct.** If you don't have an electronic signature, please type your name instead.
- **In relation to any cautions and convictions you may have, it is important to know what and when you are required to disclose.** The job details will highlight whether you are applying for a position which is exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975. In most cases, these will be roles that are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure check. You should also refer to our Recruitment of Ex-offenders statement on our website for further information.
- **Please list any formal qualifications on your form.** We'll need to see the certificates for your qualifications at interview stage.
- **Make sure you include paid work, unpaid work and any work experience in your employment history.** Start with your current employment, or if you are currently unemployed, your most recent employment. If there are any gaps in your employment, please tell us why.
- **At least one of your referees should be your current employer.** If you are not currently employed, simply provide your most recent employer. If you don't have any employment history, think about one professional and one personal referee who would best describe your suitability for the role.



# Four top tips for a great application...

1

## Before you start, check out the person specification

The person specification highlights the key things we're looking for, as well as how we intend to measure when you have them. The essential criteria are those things which you must have in order to do the job, so it's important that you are able to say 'yes, I've got those' before you invest time and effort in completing your form. Desirable criteria are qualities we believe would be an advantage for you to have.

But don't panic if you don't have them - often, these are areas we would look to develop within the role, so they may simply be ways we can train you up. Of course, if we get lots of applications for the role, we may use the desirable criteria to narrow things down a little.

2

## Be yourself

As we mentioned earlier, our values are a really important part of how we recruit. We're looking to find out whether your personality will be a good fit at PSS, so be honest and be yourself - let your personality shine through in your application form and tell us how our values fit in your life.

3

## Tell us all about it

We often find that applicants will state that they have what it takes to do the job, but don't tell us why in enough detail. Our fortune-telling skills aren't the greatest, so please make sure you tell us why or how you meet the person specification.

A good way to make sure you're telling us what we need to know is to have a look at the person specification and note down an example that proves you have the skills, knowledge or experience in each thing on the list. Every time you tell us you have what it takes on your application form, give us one of your examples.

4

## Don't send us your CV

Unless our advert requests it, we won't accept CVs, so please don't send us yours. We're looking for some specific information that we want to ask you about on your application form, so we won't consider your CV as an application for the role on offer. Sorry about that.

A stylized illustration of a mountain range composed of several peaks in shades of teal and yellow. A single red flag is planted in the ground on the right side of the image, flying towards the left. The flag has the words "Top Tips!" written on it in a white, sans-serif font.

Top Tips!

# Got any questions?

## Who should I contact if I have any special requirements?

If you're unable to complete our online application form and need some support, and/or you need our documents in an alternative format, for example, large print, please call our **People and Culture Team** on **0151 702 5555**.

## How long will it take for you to decide if I've got an interview?

This can vary depending on the number of applications we receive for each vacancy. Generally speaking, we do try our best to make or decision and contact applicants invited for interview within two weeks of the closing date.

## Will I be notified if my application is unsuccessful and will I receive feedback?

We know how much time and effort goes into an application and we really appreciate the time you've taken to apply for a job with us. Due to the volume of applications we receive, we're unable to inform and provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates at the shortlisting stage. If you haven't heard from us by the interview date, unfortunately you won't have been shortlisted for the role.

## Why are you asking for my equality information?

We have a Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy which aims to eliminate discrimination in employment. Candidates are selected on merit only, therefore all applicants will be afforded equal opportunities in employment irrespective of age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, religion or belief. We're committed to monitoring equality information, but we need your help to do this.

Candidates who consider themselves to be disabled will also be given the opportunity to attend an interview if they meet the essential criteria for the role.

## How will the information I provide be used?

The information in your application will be used for the sole purposes of recruitment and diversity monitoring. We will process your information fairly and lawfully for these purposes. We will not share your information with other agencies or individuals, except to prevent fraud, or if required to do so by law. If you are unsuccessful, we will retain your information for six months, after which it will be destroyed in accordance with GDPR requirements. For further information about this, please call our **Quality and Compliance Team** on **0151 702 5555**.





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*"The time is always right  
to do what is right."*

Martin Luther King