

Keeping an eye on your applications

It is highly likely that you will need to send out more than just one application, and it is also unadvisable to put all your eggs in one basket. It is normal, and legitimate, to apply for several positions at the same time. Employers take different amounts of time with their recruitment processes: some select quickly and give prompt feedback, in other cases you may have to wait some weeks for a first response.

Save all job advertisements

Save interesting job posts as soon as you discover them. Publishing vacancies is costly for employers, which is why the time in which they are not available on job exchanges for longer than necessary. Even if you have already sent your application, you may need the content to prepare for the job interview.

Archive those documents you used for your application in precisely this version. By saving them, you can later check what you wrote and submitted.

Keep the overview

Create a document to manage your applications, and record important information about each planned and sent application. For instance, this could be:

- Application deadline/Closing date for applications
- Date you submitted the application
- Time when the vacancy is to be filled
- Name of contact person(s)
- Application channel (e.g. e-mail-address, link to online form)
- Feedback status
- Documents that you have submitted

Check what employers share about their recruitment processes

Many employees explain their recruitment processes and provide information about e.g. steps, documents, the duration or participating persons. This means that you, as an applicant, can find out what you can expect and what an employer expects. Usually, you can find information like this on the employer's website. For more tips, please read the manual about employer's instructions.

Make sure you receive a confirmation of receipt

Ask the employer for confirmation that your application has been received. This is the only way to be sure that your documents have arrived. Acknowledgements of receipt can be automated messages or personally written emails from the recipient. Didn't receive a confirmation? Then ask for one.

Make sure that employers can reach you

Whilst you are waiting for a response, you might need to check the following:

- If e-mails were caught by your spam filter
- If there is enough space in your mailbox
- If the mailbox on your phone is activated and there is a friendly message

Do not expect employers to try several times to reach you.

Take action, if you do not hear anything

What is the appropriate time to show up and ask, if I have not yet heard anything? Recruitment processes vary greatly among employers depending on e.g. the size of the organisation, or the number of recruitment specialists. Things that private companies usually handle quickly, can take much longer by public authorities due to legal regulations.

Give your employer two weeks to check your application. If there is an application deadline, do not expect to hear back before the deadline. If there is no deadline, you can get back to them after three weeks, preferably by phone. In a call, you can confirm your interest and make a good impression.

Be patient, if you have submitted an unsolicited application

Remember, if you sent an unsolicited application there is no exact vacancy a recruiter needs to fill. This means that it may take longer before you hear back. Besides reading your application, HR decision-makers e.g. also have to check whether the timeframe of an internship fits, whether topics are suitable for a thesis, or whether adequate supervision can be provided. If you are looking for your first full-time job, you may be placed in a pool and employers will only contact you as soon as suitable positions are free.

Reach out, if you are no longer interested in a position

Do you know that you are going to take another position but are still waiting for feedback about other applications? Inform these employers that you would like to withdraw your application, once you have signed a contract. The same also applies in case the job is no longer interesting for you.

As long as you do not reject the position, employers will assume that you are still interested in it. A friendly rejection is a fair way to conclude the process; this may be important for you in the future.