

Guidance for Creating a Statement of Suitability

General Overview

As part of the application process, clients may ask you to provide a Statement of Suitability or respond to a specific open question. This is your opportunity to go beyond the CV - to bring your skills, experience, and impact to life in a way that speaks directly to the role you're applying for.

A well-crafted statement not only strengthens your application but also acts as a valuable tool to help you reflect on your achievements, articulate your leadership impact, and prepare for interviews.

Why a Statement of Suitability Matters

Think of it as your personal narrative - a chance to:

- Showcase how your experience aligns with the role.
- Demonstrate how you've made a difference in previous positions.
- Bring to life the how behind your achievements, not just the what.
- Help the hiring panel understand your potential fit and future value.

It's also a helpful exercise for you, giving you a head start on interview preparation by reconnecting with your most relevant and high-impact examples.

Tailor It To the Role

Avoid using a generic response. A strong statement should be explicitly tailored to the specific role and organisation. Start by:

- Carefully reviewing the job description and person specification.
- Identifying key themes, responsibilities, and essential criteria.
- Choosing the most relevant elements and reflecting on how your experience aligns.

Your goal is to provide evidence-based examples that demonstrate how you've previously delivered in similar contexts - with clear reference to impact and outcomes.

Bring Out Your Leadership Impact

For senior or executive-level positions, it's particularly important to showcase not just your operational delivery, but your strategic leadership impact. Consider reflecting on areas such as:

- Leading transformation or culture change.
- Driving innovation or digital strategies.
- Championing Diversity & Inclusion.
- Building high-performing teams.
- Coaching, mentoring, or developing others.
- Representing your organisation externally (e.g., at conferences or in the media).

Don't just describe what you did - articulate your role in shaping outcomes, influencing others, and creating value.

Structuring Your Statement

There is no one-size-fits-all format, but clarity and readability are key. Based on experience and feedback, we recommend Sub-headings aligned to the essential criteria. This allows you to address each requirement clearly and directly. Under each heading, include a short paragraph explaining your relevant experience and achievements.

The STAR Method

When giving examples, structure them using the STAR technique:

Situation - What was the context?

Task - What were you responsible for?

Action - What did you do?

Result - What was the outcome and impact?

This approach helps you to tell a concise, structured, and compelling story - and makes it easier for hiring managers to understand the relevance of your experience.

Alternative formats

While sub-headings and STAR-based paragraphs are often the clearest format, some people prefer to use:

- General bullet points (especially where brevity is required).
- A freestyle narrative format (if you're confident in weaving a compelling story).

Choose the format that suits your communication style - but make sure it remains clear, focused, and aligned to the role requirements.

Final Tips

- Keep it concise - typically 1-2 pages.
- Focus on recent and relevant experience.
- Don't just list responsibilities - highlight outcomes and impact.
- Avoid jargon - use plain English that's accessible and engaging.
- Proofread - ensure your statement is well-written and error-free.
- Ask someone else to review it - a second opinion can often help spot gaps or clarify messages.

Considerations to support your application for the AD DDaT role.

Please note, the following points are offered as guidance only and should be considered as suggestions rather than prescriptive requirements:

1. Enterprise-Level Transformation Leadership

- Specific examples of leading digital transformation initiatives at scale (e.g., across departments or entire organisations).
- Context around the complexity of the environment (e.g., legacy systems, low digital maturity, resistance to change).
- Outcomes achieved: improved service delivery, cost savings, increased user satisfaction, etc.
- If applicable, mention experience in public sector or regulatory bodies, highlighting unique challenges and how they were addressed.

Tip: Use metrics to quantify impact (e.g., “Reduced processing time by 20% across 2 business units”).

2. Agile and Iterative Delivery Expertise

- Examples of transitioning teams or organisations from waterfall/traditional models to agile or hybrid delivery.
- Techniques used to embed agile principles (e.g., training, coaching, agile ceremonies).
- Challenges faced and how they were overcome (e.g., cultural resistance, skill gaps).
- Evidence of iterative delivery success (e.g., MVP launches, continuous improvement cycles).

Tip: Highlight collaboration with product owners, delivery managers, and cross-functional teams.

3. Strategic DDaT Leadership and Influence

- Experience building and leading multidisciplinary teams (e.g., data scientists, architects, cyber specialists).
- Leadership style and how it fosters inclusion, collaboration, and capability development.
- Examples of influencing senior stakeholders and communicating complex concepts in accessible ways.
- Initiatives that built momentum for change (e.g., digital strategy roadshows, stakeholder engagement plans).

Tip: Mention any mentoring or talent development efforts that helped grow internal capability.

4. Data and Technology Enablement and Governance

- Contributions to data and technology strategies that improved service delivery or operational resilience.

- Experience with cyber security principles and how they were embedded into design and delivery.
- Examples of improving data quality, accessibility, and insights (e.g., implementing data governance frameworks, dashboards).
- How systems/platforms were made secure and scalable.

Tip: Reference frameworks or standards used (e.g. ISO 27001, GDS Service Standard).

5. Commercial and Supplier Management

- Examples of managing supplier relationships, including contract negotiation and performance management.
- Use of public procurement frameworks (e.g., G-Cloud, CCS) and how they ensured value for money.
- Experience dealing with underperformance or renegotiating contracts.
- Evidence of commercial acumen and accountability (e.g., budget management, cost-benefit analysis).

Tip: Highlight any innovations in supplier collaboration or procurement strategy.

Good Luck!

We wish you the very best with your application. Taking the time to craft a thoughtful and well-structured statement of suitability can make all the difference - helping you stand out, tell your story, and demonstrate the value you can bring. If you'd like further support or examples of what good looks like, please don't hesitate to reach out to your recruitment lead at GatenbySanderson.