



## Writing a CV

A CV is a marketing document, tailored to the requirements of the position to which you are applying. One standard CV will not fit all jobs.

An employer should be able to quickly identify that you have the skills, experience and qualifications needed. Be clear and concise.

Please note, the suggestions in this document, relate only to CVs used for the UK job market.

### Personal Details

Include your name and address, phone number and email. Age, date of birth, marital status, religion, nationality are not required. A title of 'curriculum vitae' is not necessary.

### Career Profile / Career Objective

Some employers read these, others do not. If you include a statement, keep it very brief, specific and relevant to the job. Avoid general descriptions like 'excellent communicator'. Instead, provide clear examples elsewhere in the CV that demonstrate you have effectively applied the skills required for the job.

### Education

Briefly detail your education with dates and qualifications. Many employers look for high academic achievement, so include good grades if you have them.

Your current or most recent degree or postgraduate qualification is likely to be the most significant part of your education. It may even relate directly to the job, so list it first. You might list some of the modules, especially any that show knowledge relevant to the job.

Employers in areas like IT and engineering like to see brief detail of any practical elements of your study, e.g. projects, case studies or dissertation, if applicable.

Earlier qualifications, such as A level and GCSE (or overseas equivalents), should be mentioned briefly with grades if they are good.

### Relevant Work Experience & Other Employment

Detail full-time or part-time work, placements, internships, or casual work. Include your duties, responsibilities and achievements.

### Professional Skills

This section is for you to demonstrate your level of competency e.g. with computer software and spoken languages. Technical skills associated with your industry may also be important e.g. programming languages for some IT roles, legal research software for legal roles.

### Achievements & Awards

Your academic achievements and contributions to work & volunteering can be highlighted throughout your CV. You may want to include other achievements/awards in a separate section e.g. music or sport related award.

### Extracurricular Involvement / Voluntary Work

This section presents another angle on the kind of person you are through the activities you choose to get involved in. Examples include membership of societies, groups, teams (inside and outside of university), committee experience, or being a student/course representative.

### Interests

Some employers like to talk to you about your interests. They might do this to put you at your ease. Think about what makes you unique, but be honest and brief. Try to back this up with interesting facts of achievements, e. g. instead of saying you are interested in basketball, say that you play in a team.

### References

Ask at least two people if they will write a reference about you if an employer asks. Someone you have worked for and someone who has taught you, e.g. an academic from your current course. Do not use family members as referees. Some people write 'references available on request' rather than give full contact details of referees.

## A few tips on Formatting

- No more than 2 pages in length
- Use plain font (e.g. Arial)
- Check spelling & grammar
- Font should be no smaller than 11pts
- Use bullet points to market your responsibilities and achievements more concisely.
- Align dates and bullet points
- Use the same bullet points throughout
- Keep layout clear and simple
- Avoid colour, borders and elaborate graphics unless applying for a design role
- Use bold sparingly to highlight headings / significant achievements

## Use a CV when:

- Requested by the employer
- Applying speculatively
- Attending networking events where you may meet a potential recruiter

Do not use a CV when you have been asked to fill out an online application, unless the employer asks for a CV to be attached.

## Different styles of CVs

Chronological CVs are common, an example format follows. Different sectors may be looking for particular information so consider including:

**Law:** A section detailing your legal experience

**IT:** A skills section detailing technical IT skills.

**Engineering & IT:** Brief, clear detail of practical elements of your course e.g. projects

**Journalism:** Brief detail of published work and/or link to online portfolio

**Academia:** Include details of publications, conferences and research.

## Online submission of CVs

It is common to submit your CV online. In some cases initial screening is electronic. Ensure you use key words that link to the job requirements and positive, action words indicating skills and achievements.

## Emailing my CV

If there are no clear instructions from the employer, it is common to send it as an attachment with an email written like a cover letter. Alternatively,

email the CV and a separate cover letter as attachments.

## Posting your CV on the internet

Many online jobsites require you to upload your CV. Consider whether you are likely to reach your target employers this way and if you want your CV to be public to lots of people. Check:

- Can it be updated easily and at no cost?
- Is it listed in a database?
- How long will it be in the databank?

If you do put your CV online, take out the contact details of your referees.

## Online portfolios/your own website

For some job areas you may want to showcase your skills or examples of your work by creating your own website. Include the URL in your CV to enable potential employers to link to it if they wish. Ensure the website and content are professional and positive examples of your skills.

### Resources and support offered by the Career & Skills Development Service

#### CV Checking

Book a CV checking appointment on our website [www.city.ac.uk/careers](http://www.city.ac.uk/careers)

#### CV Workshops

Book onto one of our workshops on CVs and cover letters, check our website for dates.

#### Career Guides

Available on our website. They include:

*Cover Letters*

*Application Forms*

*Action Words for CVs and Applications*

*Skills Employers Look For*

#### Websites

[www.city.ac.uk/careers](http://www.city.ac.uk/careers)

[http://delicious.com/City\\_Careers/cv](http://delicious.com/City_Careers/cv)

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cvs.htm>

#### Reference resources

See our selection of books on CV writing and sample CVs (available for reference only).

## Sample CV Format

The format and type of CV, such as chronological, skills-based, industry specific, academic, is your choice. Target it to the position you are applying for, and research the job and the skills & experience required. Why not ask for comment on your CV from one of our consultants? This sample format is a guide only.

### Name

### Address

Contact details (include number & email)

## Career Profile (optional)

- A brief statement (2-3 lines) about specific skills & experience you have to offer the employer
- Remember you are applying for **THE JOB** not A JOB, this is where you tailor your application

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## Education

**Date**                      **Course**                      **Institution / University / Secondary School / College**

- Classification grade/ mark/ awards / scholarships etc
- Relevant Modules & projects
- Dissertation project
- Use the same format for secondary education (including A levels & GCSE's or equivalent)

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## Relevant Work Experience (you may want to put this section first if you have lots of experience)

**Date**                      **Position**                      **Employer/firm etc,**

- Include statements using bullet points about duties/responsibilities/contributions (use **action words** to start each statement)
- Include all paid & voluntary work (placements & other relevant experience)

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## Other Employment

**Date**                      **Position**                      **Employer/firm etc,**

- Include statements about duties/responsibilities/contributions (use **action words** to start each statement)

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## Professional Skills

**Languages:** e.g. Arabic (Fluent)

**IT Skills (include computer packages):** e.g. Microsoft Office, outlook etc

**Technical Skills (related to discipline/industry/job):** e.g. Web development and computer programming

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## Achievements / Awards (optional, or incorporate into education / employment section)

**Date**    Achievement/Award title and/or details

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## Extra Curricular Involvement / Voluntary Work

**Date**                      **Position**                      **Organisation**

- Include statements about duties/responsibilities/contributions (use **action words** to start each statement)
- Possible to include involvement in Charities / Community Involvement etc

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## Interests (optional)

Be interesting!

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## References

To be provided on request (always make sure your references are aware you will be providing their details)

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