







PART TWO APPLY

MODULE 6

WRITING YOUR FIRST CV

PERSONAL PROFILE	SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS
	
	
WORK EXPERIENCE	EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

JOB SEEKING SKILLS



MODULE 6



Writing your first CV

What is a CV?

- A CV is a document that outlines your skills, qualifications and work experience.
- A good CV is the most important tool of the trade for any really serious job seeker!

Why have a CV?

- Most employers expect you to send one when you apply for a job.
- Employers use them to help choose who to interview.
- A good CV will persuade an employer that you are worth interviewing.

Why would I use a CV?

You can use it to:

- apply for advertised jobs
- apply 'on spec' to employers (not applying to a specific job advert, but asking a company if they have any vacancies)
- help you to fill in application forms (traditional and online)
- help you get ready for interviews
- refer to if you are asked questions when you phone about a job.

STARTING YOUR CV

A CV is essentially a marketing tool – your 'personal brand'.

It sets out your skills, qualities, qualifications and work experience in a way that will persuade the employer to interview you.

You can set out your CV in lots of different ways. Getting it right is largely a matter of following a few basic rules in terms of its structure and content, and choosing a style or format an employer will find attractive and easy to read.

Once you are happy with your basic CV you can try different designs and formatting. Remember to tailor your CV to the specific job and type of work you are applying for. This is really important. You will cover how to match your skills to a job in the next module.

A skills-based CV is a good idea if you have little or no work experience. It emphasises your skills rather than your work history.

BASIC CV STRUCTURE

Contact details

Include your full name, full address including the postcode, your landline phone number (including the area code) and/or your mobile number, and your email address. You don't need to include your date of birth or age.

Personal Profile

A personal profile is a short statement, just two or three sentences, highlighting your very best skills and qualities. It isn't essential, but is a great way to catch the employer's attention. For example:

"I am a friendly and creative school leaver with a strong interest in fashion. I have excellent communication skills, love working with people and enjoy being part of a team."

Skills and achievements

List your key skills and strengths – and those most relevant to the job. Try to list each skill with a heading, and give one or two brief examples of situations where you've used the skill, or achievements that demonstrate you using the skill.

Remember to look back at the work you did in [Module 1: All about you](#) – this will help.

Education and qualifications

Detail the secondary schools and colleges you've attended. Start with the most recent and work your way back. Include the name of the school or college, and the dates you attended.

Under each school or college list your qualifications. Again, start with your most recent qualifications and work back. Include the subject or course name, level of qualification and grade you achieved. If you haven't received your grades, you can put 'Pending'.

Work experience

List your most recent work experience first, and work back.

Include work experience placements and any part time or voluntary work you've done. Give the dates, the employer's name, your role and a short description of what you did. What did you learn and what did you contribute?

Voluntary work is a good addition to a CV, as it shows that you are a committed person.

No work experience? Leave out this section. Instead focus on your skills and any interests or activities you've taken part in that might be relevant to the job.

Interests

Keep this section fairly short. Mention any interests or activities that show you have skills relevant to the job. Interviewers may ask questions about your interests, so don't be tempted to make them up!

Why include interests? They can give an employer an indication of your strengths and personality.

References

You don't have to name your referees on your CV. Simply write 'References available on request.' The employer will chase these up later if they want to take your application further.

You will need two referees. One will usually be a teacher from your school or a tutor from college. Your second referee could be a work experience placement provider, employer, coach or a similar professional. Always ask for their permission before you add them to your CV.

If you are including them on your CV, give their: name, job title and employer's name (where appropriate), phone number and (if possible) email address.

HOW SHOULD A CV LOOK?

On the next page, **Anatomy of a CV** illustrates how a CV is typically laid out.

This also allows you to see the main parts that an employer will scan, before reading any further.



Anatomy of a CV

Order of sections will depend on whether you are creating a skills-based or experienced-based CV.

Personal Details

Your full name and address, telephone number and email address.

Header

No need to type CV at the top of the page, your name in a larger size of type face will do nicely.

Relevant Skills

List only skills relevant to the job you are applying for.

Karen Macdonald

25 Main Street, Anytown, AT8 1AB
01234 234567
karmacdon@email.com

Personal Profile

I am a quick worker, not squeamish, and experienced in dealing with both large and small animals. I am good at communicating with both children and adults.

Skills

Working with Animals - Working with horses at the stables and taking care of my pets.

Training people in one-to-one situations - Teaching people how to ride horses.

IT skills - Knowledge of Microsoft Office and using the internet.

Team Working - Working with groups of adults and children at the stables.

Work Experience

The Riding Stables **Stable Assistant** **July 2024 - present**

I currently spend weekends grooming horses and mucking out stables, as well as teaching riding to children and adults.

The Call Centre **Admin Assistant** **November 2023**

I spent one week in the general office, dealing with the mail, filing, inputting data and learning how to operate a large switchboard.

Education

High School (Anytown) 2020- 2024

Qualifications

National 5	English	B	2024
National 5	Administration and IT	B	2024
National 5	Biology	B	2024
National 5	History	B	2024
National 4	Mathematics	Pass	2024
National 4	Art and Design	Pass	2024
National 4	French	Pass	2024

Interests

Working with animals - I share a horse with a friend and love riding and taking part in events. I also have a dog and a rabbit and take care of both in my spare time.

References

Mr A Teacher, Principal Teacher of Guidance
High School
High Road
Anytown
AT8 2JM
01234 345678

Mrs B Brown, Manager
The Riding Stables
Pine Forest Glen
Near Anytown
AT10 3LK
01234 456789

Personal Profile (optional)

A short statement highlighting your main skills and personal qualities - 2 or 3 lines should do.

Employment / Work Experience

List the most recent first, and work back. Include voluntary or part time work. Provide dates, employer's name and location, your job title, and a description of the duties and skills you developed as a result.

Education/ Secondary school and college education (names, location and dates attended.)

Start with the most recent and work back. List all qualifications, including those yet to be taken. List by subject or course title, level of qualification, grade (if relevant) and the date attained.

References

Either list the names, or you can say 'References available upon request.'

Interests

This means list only skills relevant to the job you are applying for.

CV Checklist

The main thing to remember when writing your first CV is that employers don't have a lot of time to spare reading about someone's life story.

Warning: On average an employer may only spend around 30 seconds scanning your CV before making a decision to read any further!

So - think carefully about what to put in your CV – and what to leave out.

A good CV should be:

- ✓ **word processed** – looks professional and is easy to change for different jobs
- ✓ **short** – for someone with little, or no work experience, one or two A4 pages are sufficient
- ✓ **easy to read** – clear font; text separated by bullet points and headings
- ✓ **attractive** – well laid out and formatted
- ✓ **tailored** – to the job, or type of job, you're applying for
- ✓ **accurate** – no mistakes in spelling, grammar or punctuation (don't rely just on the spellchecker – they don't catch everything!)
- ✓ **truthful** – no exaggeration, or complete lies
- ✓ **focused** – containing relevant information only
- ✓ **positive** – about you, your skills, personal qualities and experience
- ✓ **complete** – avoid gaps in your education or experience. Double check your dates!
- ✓ **clean** – no smudges or stains – or crumpled paper
- ✓ **checked** – get someone to check it for mistakes before you send it.

OTHER THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Don't put 'CV' or 'Curriculum Vitae' at the top of your CV.
- Always send a covering letter, or covering email, with your CV.
- Save an electronic master copy of your CV.
- Adapt your CV for different jobs, and try different styles or formats.
- Choose a classic font such as Arial, Verdana or Times New Roman. They are available on most computer systems, so the formatting will not be changed when sending an electronic copy.
- Don't go overboard on the formatting. Keep the style simple and consistent.
- Update your CV regularly.
- Take a copy of your CV along with you to interviews.
- If you are emailing your CV, attach it as a file – don't send it in the body of the message.
- Don't use an inappropriate email address, such as 'starkstaringmad@aol.com'!



Activity 1: Creating a CV

Using the Easy CV tool on Planit, you can now have a go at creating your own CV.



To complete the following activity online, you must log in to your Planit Portfolio, or sign up for one, at

www.planitplus.net/Portfolio/SignUp/

Easy CV

- Select **Easy CV** from the '**Portfolio**' section. Work your way through each section, following the instructions.
- If there are any sections that you want to complete later, such as Work Experience, you can click through to the next section.
- View the **Activity 1 Sample CV** to see a CV for someone leaving school, and how they might set out their skills and experience.
- There are some hints and tips throughout to help you.

If you are completing this as an offline exercise, use Word to create your own CV. Use the **Activity 1 Sample CV** to guide you.

Now you know how to create your CV, you can move on to

[Module 7: Matching your skills to a job](#)

Or [click here](#) to return to the main menu.