Creating a CV

The purpose of a CV is to demonstrate your relevant skills, experience and knowledge that makes you a strong candidate for the role and organisation you are applying to. It is often the first opportunity you have to make an impression. Your CV is also usually accompanied by a covering letter.

What do I include in a CV?
Create a 'Master CV' which contains all information. From this, you should then tailor your CV for each application, based on the requirements of the job as set out by the employer in the job description and person specification.

CV format
As a current student or recent graduate you should ensure your CV is in a Professional Style. This means it should:
- be consistent in layout (including font size, heading style etc.)
- no longer than 2 pages in length
- have a good balance of text and space

The traditional – or 'reverse chronological' – CV is the most commonly used. It often lists your education, work experience and additional activities – with your most recent achievements first. The sections of the traditional CV will normally be:

- **Personal information**
- **Profile/Career Objective**
- **Education**
- **Work experience**

- **Skills Profile**
- **Interests and achievements**
- **References**

1. Personal Information/Contact Details
Include your name and contact details (address, email address & telephone number) in this section. You do not need to include your DOB, gender or national insurance number on your CV. Keep this section brief, it should not take up more than 2-3 lines on your CV (not half a page!)

2. Personal Profile/Career Objective
This short section is usually 3-4 lines long and sums up who you are, your career objective, your key experiences/skills strengths and your USPs (Unique selling points). This is usually the first thing the recruiter will read about you on your CV, so it is key you make a good first impression. Ensure that this is tailored for each specific job application and not generic, as the recruiter will recognise this.

3. Education

Begin with your most recent/valuable qualifications and work backwards chronologically (usually to GCSEs). Do not include your primary school. For each section include dates (to and from), name of the institute studied at, and name & grade of the qualification. Even if you have not graduated yet, be sure to include your University Degree, along with relevant modules and projects (e.g. dissertation). Include your degree classification or expected classification if you are a finalist, or else include your average mark if you are in second year.

4. Work experience

This section you can detail your employment history, or other work experience, such as internships, placements or work shadowing. For each period of work, in the subheading you should include dates (to and from), the name of the employer, and your job title. For example:

'**Sept 2017-June 2018, Sainsburys, Customer Service Assistant'**

Under this you should include your duties and key responsibilities, as well as highlighting in key accomplishments/projects that you have achieved through this work experience. You should aim to align your work experience section to the skills required for the job. Explain the skills that you have developed and how they contribute to the role.

5. Skills Profile

A skills profile allows you to demonstrate your key skills as well as evidencing how you meet the employer's requirements as set out by the job description.
Pick 4-5 key skills and have each skill as a subheading, then demonstrate how you show these skills by using examples from University (modules, projects, assignments), work experience (part time work, internships, placement) or extra-curricular activities (teams, hobbies, societies etc.)

6. Interests and achievements

This section is important as it allows you to include any past times or additional achievements that demonstrate relevant skills or qualities you can include them here.

7. References

You should the details of two references. Ideally one should know you in an academic setting, and the other in a work setting. You should include their name, job title, work address and contact number/email.

Check out our resources on the Employability Portal and use our CV checklist to ensure that you have included all relevant points. Once you have a draft CV complete, use our CV development tool, Vmock platform to receive instant feedback on your CV.

Search for us – CareersAtUlster