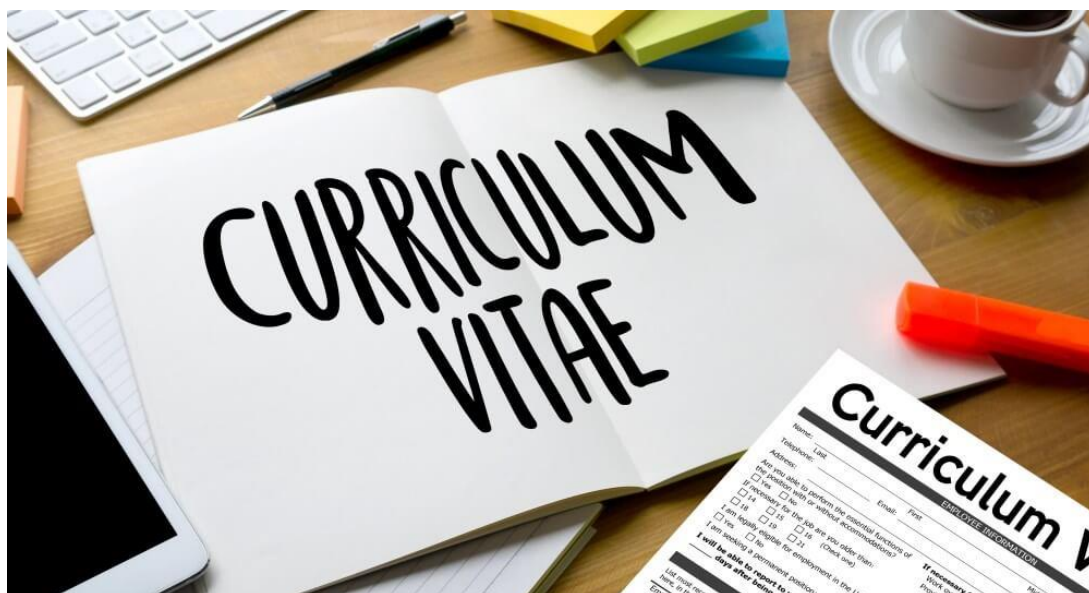


Writing a CV and a Personal Statement



2021-2022

What is a CV?

A curriculum vitae (commonly referred to as a 'CV') is an overview of your skills, experience, and qualifications that demonstrates why you are suitable for a particular job vacancy.

Writing your CV is a key part of any job application process, whether you are applying for a part-time job at college, a graduate role, or a position a few years into your career. Your CV may be used as the basis for subsequent interviews, where you will be asked more specifically about what you have included.

Below is what should go in a CV, but it might be helpful to keep the following questions in mind when writing yours:

- Are you showing you have the **appropriate key skills and experience** that are being asked for (in the job description)?
- Are you displaying this in the **clearest and most concise manner**? Do not make it difficult for someone (with a long list of CVs to go through) to find what they are looking for.
- Does this make you **stand out** from other candidates who may have similar academic achievements, qualifications, and experience?
- Would this **persuade** a potential (very busy) employer to take the time to meet you for an interview?

What is the right format for a CV?

While there is no 'one way' to write a CV, there are a couple of elements that most CVs always have:

- **Length:** no longer than two sides of (white) A4 paper, typed (not including your cover letter).
- **Font:** black, between size 10-12, and a sensible type such as Arial or Times New Roman.
- **Layout:** simple and clear, using headings, formatting (bolding, italics, underlining), and spacing to structure the information and make it easily scannable.

In fact, the simpler the layout, the less likely it is that elements will appear oddly when opened on different devices. Tip: edit it in Microsoft Word (or equivalent), and once it is finalised, save and send it as a PDF.

Alternatively, it might be easier to avoid the following 'CV don'ts':

- **Don't** try to stand out by using lots of colours, or other unusual formatting.
- **Don't** save it under an odd filename, such as John_Smith_CV_CopyCopyRealOne4.doc.
- **Don't** include a photo unless it's specifically asked for – this can take up valuable space.
- **Don't** send it without doing a thorough check for spelling, punctuation, and grammar – there's no excuse for typos!

What should go in a CV?

Please note: This guidance is for helping you to write your very first CV, whilst still at school. In the future when applying for jobs as part of your career, the format and content of your CV will change.

In order to apply for Work Experience and future college placements, you will need a CV. To make up for your lack of job history with you being in year 10, your CV needs to be skills-based rather than experience-based. This means highlighting key skills you have picked up in other scenarios which you can transfer to a workplace.

Common skills that are often asked for include working as part of a team, meeting deadlines, solving problems, and being organised.

Therefore, rather than your job experience being front and centre, look at the skills being asked for, and lead with examples where you have demonstrated these in and out of school.

Example: Applying for a part time job in a café

For each role you apply for, think carefully about what each employer is looking for, in terms of soft skills and hard skills. Sometimes this will be stated in the job application – other times you will have to think about what the role requires.

If you are applying to work in a shop or cafe for example, these skills are important to your employer:

- **Good customer service** – friendly, likeable, going out of the way to help people
- **Good communicator** – so you can help people who have questions
- **Attention to detail** – so you can spot when things are not right
- **Numeracy** – as you will be handling both money and goods
- **Reliability** – they want to know you will show up for your shifts
- **Trustworthiness** – as again you will be handling both money and goods
- **IT literacy** – to use any in-store systems

Most of the above skills are **SOFT** skills with the exception of numeracy which is a **HARD** skill.

It is very easy to say you have a certain soft skill – as many people do on their CV – but it is far more powerful if you can offer proof that you have that skill. You might not be able to offer evidence of everything the employer wants/needs but you should try and cover as many as you can, keeping things brief and to the point. Here is an example of how you could match the above list of skills to evidence that you have a particular skill:

- **I am able to deal with the public effectively** – I have been a St John’s Ambulance cadet since I was 10 and regularly volunteer providing first aid cover at local football matches.
- **I am a good communicator and a competent leader** – I now teach first aid to other young people, and I also head up our school debating team each Wednesday.
- **I am reliable and trustworthy** – I regularly help my Mum when she runs stalls at the local Church to raise funds, serving customers who make purchases.
- **I have a very good level of numeracy** – I achieve 4s for most of my maths assignments.
- **I am IT literate** – I have a typing speed of 45wpm and the ability to use most basic software packages to an intermediate level (Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint).

You can see how much more convincing the above list is than if you simply write ‘Good communicator’ or ‘trustworthy’ in a list.

Contents of a CV.

Contact details:

The following should go at the top of your CV:

- ✓ Full name
- ✓ Phone number (home and mobile)
- ✓ Email address – not an embarrassing one!
- ✓ Current address (does not have to be in full)

Make sure this information is up to date so a potential employer can reach you. They will not want to have to chase you.

Summary:

A couple of sentences to describe yourself and what job you are applying for?

Academic Performance (Education):

Write down all your subjects and predicted grades. Use your most up to date report. Are there any subjects you have done really well in? Any standout exam results or pieces of coursework? Have you won any awards, such as for a project or perfect attendance?

Academic Roles:

Have you been Head Boy/Head Girl, a prefect, or peer mentor at school? How does this make your stand out from the crowd?

Extracurricular Activities and Interests:

Have you been part of any clubs, societies or sports teams in school or out? Have you volunteered, helped out in the local community, or done something for charity? How does this develop your skills and attributes?

Work Experience:

Have you helped out or shadowed a family member at their workplace, or taken part in work experience organised through your school? Write about your roles and responsibilities during work experience and what did you learn from it?

References:

A reference is a confirmation of what you have put on your CV and a way for potential employers to verify your work and/or educational history. The person who writes your reference is a referee.

It is standard to have at least two references when applying for a job. You can ask the following individuals for a reference.

- ✓ Teachers
- ✓ Careers adviser
- ✓ Sports coach
- ✓ A figure in the local community, such as a religious leader
- ✓ Your supervisor during work experience

Planning your CV:

Use the tool on Unifrog to help you plan your CV: <https://www.unifrog.org/student/cv>

Fill out each section with as much detail as you can, then you can click the “preview” tab to see how it looks.

Planning your CV:

The screenshot shows the Unifrog CV planning tool interface. At the top, there are two tabs: 'Write' (with the subtext 'Add, edit and delete text') and 'Preview' (with the subtext 'How it'll look'). Below the tabs, there is a section titled 'Your contact information' with a globe icon and the question 'How can employers get in touch with you?'. To the right of this section is a green 'Edit >' button.

Example CV:

Toby Smith

Location: xxxxxxxx
Telephone: xxxxxxxxxxxx
Email: xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Professional Profile

'Motivated young professional with an exemplary academic record and passion to progress within the financial industry'

Having achieved excellent grades at GCSE level maths, English and science, along with an active involvement in a number of clubs and societies, I am keen to pursue a career in the finance industry. I have a proven aptitude for mathematics which and have made a number of notable achievements in both my studies and extra-curricular activities which would make me an excellent asset to any finance team or department.

Core skills & achievements

- 8 A-C GCSE grades
- Mathematical aptitude
- Accomplished sportsman
- Charity events volunteer
- Maths club lead tutor
- Best science student award 2015

Education

GCSES – Secondary School – 2015

- Maths ,science, English **A**
- Geography, Media, French **B**
- Geography, Business studies **C**

Clubs and memberships

- Lead tutor of afterschool maths club
- Captain of boys hockey team
- After-school charity volunteer

Hobbies and interests

Brompton Football club

I currently captain play for Brompton boys football team as a midfielder and occasionally captain the team. I train 3 times a week and travel across the country to play at a competitive level

- Awarded player of the season 2014 and 2015
- Won the County league in 2014
- Skills gained include; leadership, motivation, communication and teamwork

Health charity

I regularly volunteer for local charity Health, where I support the running of events and have processed transactions and managed the setup numerous event stalls

Creative Writing

Currently writing my own blog where I discuss a number of my passions, including sport, finance and travel

References available on request

Personal Statement:

What is a personal statement?

A personal statement supports your application to study at a university or college. It is a chance for you to articulate why you would like to study a particular course or subject, and what skills and experience you possess that show your passion for your chosen field.

What to include in a personal statement?

✓ ***Why are you applying for your chosen course(s)?***

Explain why you want to do your chosen course(s). For example, someone who wanted to work with animals might write 'I would like to study a BTEC in animal care as I am passionate about looking after animals. I already look after two dogs and it will help me in my future career plans.'

✓ ***Why does this course interest you?***

You can write about anything you have read about the course(s) that you find interesting and would like to find out more about.

✓ ***Why do you think you are suitable for the course(s)?***

In this section, you can write about any experiences you have had that are related to the course(s), or any skills you have learnt that might help you. For example, if you have done any related volunteering or work experience, or if you have a part-time job such as babysitting, which shows more general strengths such as responsibility or commitment.

✓ ***Do your current studies (e.g., GCSEs) relate to the course(s) you have chosen? If so, how?***

You can let the provider know how much you enjoy a subject by writing about a course you have already studied that you found really interesting or you were good at.

✓ ***Skills and Achievements***

Write about anything you have done that might help with your application.

1. Write about anything you are proud of passing, for example, grade 2 in piano, or being selected for a sports team.
2. Include any awards you have done, such as Duke of Edinburgh, or through ASDAN, for example.
3. You can add any positions of responsibility you have held, for example, being a prefect or helping with young students at school.

✓ ***Hobbies and Interests***

Make a list of your hobbies, interests, and anything you do socially.

1. Think about how they show your skills and ability.

2. Try to link them to skills and experience you might need on your chosen course(s).

✓ **Work History**

Include details of placements, work experience, voluntary work, or jobs, especially if it is relevant to your chosen course(s).

1. Try to show how this experience gave you new skills or made you think about your future plans, for example, things you really enjoyed or were good at.
2. Also include any part-time work you are still doing, like a Saturday job or babysitting.

✓ **Career Plans**

Use this section to tell the provider what you might like to do in the future as a career after completing the course. Explain how you would like to use the course(s) you have applied for to help you reach your goal.

Tips to take into consideration when writing your personal statement.

- **Do** use your best English and check your spelling and grammar are correct.
- **Do** be enthusiastic – if you show your interest in the course, it will help your application.
- **Do** ask people that you trust, like your teacher/adviser or parent/carer to read through what you have written and give you feedback.
- **Don't** exaggerate – you might be asked about what you have written if you attend an interview with the course provider.
- **Don't** leave it until the last minute – it's a good idea to give yourself time to think about what you write to make sure you don't forget anything.

Useful sentence starters for writing a personal statement

I am a Year 11 student at School studying GCSEs in.....	My favourite subjects are....	I am currently.....
My strengths are.....	I am proud of.....	I enjoy.....
My greatest achievement(s) is/are....	I plan to.....	I hope to.....
I intend to.....	This year.....	While at school.....
Outside of school.....	Alongside my school work I.....	Last term I.....
Recently.....	During the summer.....	I work hard to.....
To develop my skills in.....	To achieve.....	To improve.....
I find / have foundchallenging/difficult	In addition.....	Furthermore.....

Skills you can include in your personal statement

Team work organisation	Verbal / oral communication Time management	Good listener ICT skills
Planning	Reading	Written communication
Analysing	Presenting	Researching
Problem solving	Leadership	Decision making

Qualities you can include in your personal statement

Adaptability	Flexibility	Proactive approach
Reliability	Caring / friendly	Inquisitive
Patient	Polite	Punctual
Responsible	Dedicated	Confident
Positive	Ambitious	Conscientious
Honest	Hard working / diligent	Helpful
Thoughtful	Proactive	Adventurous

Planning and writing your personal statement:

Use the tool on Unifrog to help you: <https://www.unifrog.org/student/personal-statement>

Fill out each section with as much detail as you can, then you can click the “preview” tab to see how it looks.

Remember to sell yourself and your skills to the employer!


This is your opportunity to shine

The Personal Statement is your opportunity to demonstrate that you would be an excellent student for the courses you are applying to. It is primarily an academic statement and you must target it towards the subject in which you are interested.

Latest version of your statement for studying: **ADD SUBJECT**

Write
Add, edit and delete text

Preview
How it'll look to universities

 **Section 1**
Why do you want to study this subject? Start >