

Edge Hill University

**How to Create a CV
&
Covering Letter
to address the person
specification**

CC 10

Careers Centre

Introduction

In any application one of the most important aspects is to target the specific job and show how you meet the employer's requirements. Often these will be laid out in the form of a job & person specification that shows essential and desirable criteria. It is important in any application not to ignore the criteria laid down. They should be addressed through the CV or application form and the covering letter and show how your qualifications, skills and qualities meet those required.

In doing this it is important to be direct and to use examples that reinforce what you are saying and offer evidence for your relevant abilities.

Addressing a Person Specification

The following Person Specification is for a support officer with the strategic partnership of a local government office. It is an example of the kind of essential and desirable criteria that you might be sent within the application pack for a job.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title: Partnership Support Officer (Local Government)

Ref:

Qualifications	E = Essential D = Desirable	Identified by: AF – application form I - Interview
Degree or be of graduate level ability (i.e. NVQ Level 4)	E	AF
Knowledge		
Knowledge of the principles of partnership working.	D	AF / I
Knowledge of current issues facing local government.	D	AF / I

Experience		
Experience in a local authority or similar large organisation.	E	AF / I
Experience of managing projects / programmes of work	E	AF / I
Experience of budgetary control and computerised systems	E	AF / I
Experience of working in a partnership setting	D	AF / I
Skills and Abilities		
Ability to undertake research projects and report findings.	E	AF / I
Ability to work effectively as part of a team.	E	AF/I
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.	E	AF / I
Ability to manage a diverse workload	E	AF / I
Ability to analyse and present information using IT software packages, including spreadsheets.	E	AF / I
Special Requirements		
Flexibility to attend evening meetings	E	AF / I

Reading the application:

On receipt of your application the employer will:

- Look at your application – either CV and covering letter or application form if used.
- Check through your application for each of the essential and desirable criteria for the job.
- Scan your application to see if you have mentioned that you have the qualifications and skills they are looking for.
- Look for evidence of how you have gained and used these skills in your application.
- Tick off (see the following grid) as appropriate when they are satisfied that you have the skills and qualifications needed.

At the end of the process:

- The candidates with the most ticks will be the candidates invited to the next stage of the process – usually an interview.

Remember

- If you do not mention that you have the skills or qualifications on your forms or CV they will not guess you might have them! So check your application always by going through the list on the person specification.

Shortlisting for interviews

An example of the grid used by employers when reading through applications and shortlisting:

CRITERIA	NAMES OF APPLICANTS							
	Brown	Evans	Green	Smith	Jones	Davies	White	Allen
ESSENTIAL								
Degree/NVQ 4	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓
Excellent Communication		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Ability to work as part of a team	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Ability to research projects and report findings	✓	✓	✓					✓
Excellent Interpersonal Skills	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
Ability to analyse & present information using IT software packages, including spreadsheets		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Flexibility to attend evening meetings	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ability to manage a diverse workload	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Experience in a local authority or similar large organisation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Experience of budgetary control and computerised systems			✓		✓		✓	
DESIRABLE								
Knowledge of the principles of partnership working.		✓	✓					
Knowledge of current issues facing local	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

government.								
Experience of working in a partnership setting	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
TOTAL POINTS	9	10	10	6	8	6	9	7

Curriculum Vitae

What is a CV?

CV is an abbreviation of the Latin “Curriculum Vitae”, meaning “course of life” – essentially life story. There are no hard and fast rules as to what you must or must not include in a CV and, despite the number of books that say they will provide you with it, the perfect CV does not exist. What is “perfect” for one job may not be perfect for the next if it does not address the person and job specification effectively. In this sense the perfect CV is the one that is tailored to get you the interview for a specific job.

All CV’s are designed to be a record of relevant personal, educational and work details. It is a marketing tool that can be used to inform and persuade an employer that you are the right person for the job or course. A good CV allows a potential employer to quickly see a broad outline of your qualifications, experience and skills and make a judgment on whether you are worth considering for interview. Often to do this they use a tailored shortlisting grid that compares the detail that you provide to the criteria that they have defined in the application details.

It is common for people to talk about “My CV” as if it was a single document but there is strong evidence that the most effective CVs are those that are tailored or customized for a specific career objective or job. You will probably need slightly different CVs that target the areas to which you are applying to and which you adapt according to specific needs. This may involve simply changing the order in which information is presented in order to highlight particular aspects of your background – relevant work experience, key skills or aspects of your degree programme. On the other hand it may involve representing the information that you offer to meet the needs of the potential vacancy. This can take time but if it leads to the right opportunity for you then it can be time well spent.

When do you need a CV?

Use a CV only:

- When asked to do so by an employer or in the application details or advertisement.
- As part of a speculative application.
- As part of the reply to an advertisement which asks for applications in writing

- When attending a Careers or Recruitment Fair.
- If you are calling on an employer in person - either “on spec” or by appointment following, perhaps, a speculative telephone call.

Who do you send your CV to?

If applying speculatively, Dear Sir/Madam can sound like a circular with little evidence of commitment to the particular business, organisation or institution to which you are applying. Thus it might be advisable to telephone the company and get the name of the manager to whom you should address your application. As an added benefit you may be able to speak to that manager as part of the telephone call and prepare them for your enquiry. Always be prepared to talk about yourself and the job – having a copy of your CV handy when telephoning can help you to remember details that could be forgotten in the stress of an unexpected contact.

Compiling a CV

The key to compiling a successful CV is to match yourself against the requirements of the specific job so that the employer will be persuaded that you have the skills and qualities that they need.

As a starting point:

- Analyse the job and identify the key skills that are re required.

To do this read carefully the materials provided with the application including the job description or person specification for the job (if available). You need to analyse the skills and experience required and match yourself to them. You could also find further information by:

- Reading general information about the career and what it involves. The Careers Centre has numerous leaflets on a wide variety of occupations. The internet is another source of obtaining company and occupational information. Try, for example, the graduate career profiles, which include further information sources, and the company profiles that you can find on the Prospects website - <http://www.prospects.ac.uk>
- Speaking to people who are working in the field either in the target company or alternatively within a similar company.
- Try and analyse the job yourself, using your own experience and thinking about the role, its responsibilities and the skills you would need.

- Analyse yourself – think about what skills you have gained from all areas of your life. This can include:
 - Academic Life – may include groupwork, producing reports, collecting information or giving presentations etc.
 - Work experience/previous employment – teamwork, communication, numeracy skills etc.
 - Leisure Activities – Travel experiences, sporting activities, clubs & societies etc
 - Hobbies/interests – Reading, membership of clubs, etc
 - Home Life – Planning and organization of family, shopping, personal finance etc.

Perhaps you might want to write down the skills and qualities you have and match them up to those required by the employer. NB. We stress again that if you have obtained a person/job specification detailing the skills and qualities required, then you cannot afford to ignore any of these. These will be the skills and qualities the employer will be looking for on your application. If you do not offer the evidence that will show that you meet the set criteria, then you are unlikely to proceed to the next stage of the application procedure no matter how good your application seems.

Essentially, every CV and the covering letter that accompanies it must be specifically designed and targeted to meet the criteria for the job. This involves a lot of work but is worth it, if the result is the right job!

Content of a CV

A CV should be well-presented and interesting to read. It should flow in a logical manner and demonstrate the way that you meet the essential requirements of the job. A selection of the following typical criteria can form the basis of the content.

- **Personal details** – biographical information: name, address, telephone and/or mobile number, e-mail address.
- **Career aims or personal profile** – this could consist of a paragraph to provide a broad overview of you as an individual to the employer. You can clarify your career plans and highlight specific key skills or qualities. There is evidence to suggest that personal profiles are falling out of favour with employers and are used less. A career objective can be effective in demonstrating that you are committed to a particular career, however, it does need to be specific to the role for which you are applying. An unrelated career objective could eliminate your CV without it even being read.
- **Education and qualifications** – it usual to use reverse chronology which starts with your most recent qualification, as it gives the reader the most recent exposure to what you are doing now.

It is normal to include details of the courses and qualifications that have given you access to higher education secondary education, access courses etc.

When including your degree or diploma course, it is a good idea to include a brief description of modules relevant to the post. This might also include a few details about your dissertation or project. Some technical, scientific or academic jobs would expect you to give a detailed breakdown of academic achievements.

Where your degree discipline is unrelated to the career you could also think about the skills that you have used and developed through your studies.

- **Employment/work experience** – this can include permanent, temporary, part-time and voluntary experience. Again start with the most recent first or at least make sure that you highlight work experience that is relevant to the job. There are 3 main ways of structuring this information:
 - List each job in turn and give a description of the key tasks and skills you used and developed.
 - List all the jobs briefly and their duties but follow this with a section headed “Skills”, “Key skills” or “Skills Profile” which draws evidence from your employment/work experience.
 - If you have significant relevant experience, this could be listed separately or more prominently than other work.

You need to experiment until you find the best approach for the specific application.

- **Interests and Leisure Activities** – this can include societies, clubs, positions of responsibility, sports, music, drama. It is important to stamp your personality on your CV and employers like to gain an insight into your leisure time activity. Avoid a long list, it gives little indication of your level of involvement, so instead of putting just “reading”, give some indication of your favourite authors or types of books you enjoy. Be prepared to talk about them at interview – the employer may share your interest, want to know more or simply be using your interest as a way of relaxing you.
- **Referees** – it is normal to list two, one from University and the other a current or recent employer. You should always use someone who knows you well and ask them if you can use their name. You need to include their name, job title, address, telephone number and e-mail address.

If short of space you could include a line that says “References: Enclosed” and enclose references clearly headed and neatly laid out on a separate sheet.

Presentation, Layout and Style

It is important to note that there is no one way to set out a CV and you should avoid simply copying a format and fitting in the information that you have to offer. The presentation should suit the information that you want to give rather than the other way around. Experiment with different styles and layout until you find one that suits your purpose, and remember that this may vary when you apply for different jobs or careers. However, remember that your CV does need to be well-presented otherwise the message that it is sending out about you can be a negative one!

- Keep your CV to 2 sides maximum and print on one side of the paper only.
- Print it rather than photocopy. Laser printers usually give the best quality
- Use good quality paper – usually white but cream can be acceptable.
- Proof-read carefully - check grammar, spelling etc and, where possible, ask a friend to proof-read it before you send it out – it can be easier to spot someone else’s errors rather than your own.
- Font size should be either 11 or 12.
- Headings should stand out – use bold and/or a slightly larger font size than you use in the main text.
- Be consistent in how you organize information ie. all details in reverse chronological order, not education in reverse and work history in chronological order.
- Avoid using dense blocks of text, which may be difficult or time consuming to read – the employer may miss important details. Also avoid large blank areas that might suggest an inefficient use of space.
- Space should be allocated according to the importance of the information to your CV. For example, your degree or postgraduate qualification is usually more important than your earlier or secondary education and should occupy proportionally more space on the CV.
- Remember that you can use the white space on the CV to direct the reader’s eye to the key information you want them to see. Use space wisely by thinking carefully about layout.

Special Circumstances

- Increasingly you may be asked to send a CV electronically. The best way to do this is to send your CV as an attachment to an email. This will usually preserve the format of the CV and allow you to present the information in the way that you intend. However, you may not be allowed to send it as an attachment and if you send your CV within the body of an e-mail, your layout will normally be lost. In this case you could elect to back-up the text sent CV with a hard copy sent through the postal system.
- If you have a disability you might need some help with whether to disclose your disability on your CV or covering letter. The Careers Centre has produced a booklet entitled "Disclosing Disability". Call into the Careers Centre to obtain a copy or download a copy from Download Zone of the Edge Hill careers website at:
<http://www.edgehill.ac.uk/careers/DownloadZone/Booklets.htm>
- If you have large gaps in your educational or employment history you may need help from a Careers Adviser to think of the best way of accounting for these in a positive way.

CV Checklist

Once you have completed your CV – go through the following list to see if your CV is ready to be sent to that employer!

Personal Details

- Will the employer be able to contact you easily at your address? Is it only a term time address?
- Have you included your e-mail address, telephone and/or mobile number.
- Do your personal details account for no more than one third of the page?

Education

- Have you started with your most recent qualification/education first? Does your degree/postgraduate qualification take up more space than your earlier qualifications?

- Do you tell them a little about your degree course modules studies, dissertation topic, highlighting relevant aspects?

Work Experience

- Is there as broad a range of relevant experience as possible?
- Is there more detail on your most relevant experience?
- Make sure you have no unexplained gaps in your employment history?

Skills

- Have you clearly demonstrated evidence of the skills outlined in the job details?
- Have you used examples to demonstrate these skills? You can use evidence from any area of your background - academic studies, work experience, voluntary work, leisure activities or home life.
- If you are sending the CV speculatively, have you identified skills that are needed for the chosen area of work?

Interests

- Have you used this section to demonstrate examples of skills and competencies that the employer is looking for?
- Have you concentrated on a few interests rather than a long list?

References

- Have you asked your referees for their permission to use their names and talked to them about the jobs for which you are applying?
- Can they be contacted easily? Have you included full contact details?

General

- Has it been checked for spelling, grammar and correct use of language?
- Does it fit on 2 pages without looking overcrowded?
- Have you checked there are no gaps in your history?

- Is the most relevant information given priority on the page in terms of space?
- Is it clear to read – fonts too small/large?
- Do your sections clearly reflect the information within them?
- Does it follow a consistent layout?
- Is the paper you are using good quality?
- Have you got a big enough envelope to send it in without folding?
- Have you got a covering letter to send with it?

NB. Your CV may be read quickly by an employer. This could be for just 30 seconds. Would you be impressed with yours? Check by asking a critical friend or colleague to read through the CV. Take it off them after 30 seconds and then ask them what they know about you from the CV. If they start with GCSEs or A-levels or information that is not relevant then you may need to rethink your presentation.

On the following page is a Template of a CV that you might want to use as a guide to possible sections. However, remember that your CV has to address what the employer is looking for in terms of qualifications, skills and qualities.

Example of a poor CV:

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: John Clarke
Address: 180 Ormskirk Road
Ormskirk
Lancashire
L39 4SS

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

2001 – 2006 Ormskirk High School

GCSE's Mathematics (A)
 French (A)
 Media Studies (A)
 English Language (B)
 General Science (B)
 Chemistry (B)
 Geography (B)
 English Literature (C)
 History (C)
 Physics (E)

2006 – 2008 Skelmersdale College

A Levels French (C)
 Psychology (B)
 Accounts (E)
 General Studies (F)

2008 – 2011 Edge Hill University

BA (Hons) Business Management

WORK EXPERIENCE

2005 – 2006 Hen & Chickens, Maghull
 Pub work

Summer 2007 Camp Counsellor – USA

Summer 2008 Work Placement – Graphics company

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Full clean driving licence

INTERESTS Film, Football, Travel, Photography

REFEREES

Mrs Eileen White	Dr John Jones
Ormskirk Graphics	Edge Hill University
Long Lane	St Helens Road
Ormskirk	Ormskirk

Here are just some ideas on how it could be improved – you may think of more.

- You do not need to put the title Curriculum Vitae (an employer will know what it is!)
- No telephone number, mobile, e-mail address
- Look how much space GCSE's are taking up compared to the degree – tell them more about the degree. Avoid listing GCSEs vertically. Number of GCSEs may be sufficient – add those required by the application e.g.: maths, English and science for teaching applications.
- Avoid putting grades below C in GCSE or E in A level unless it is important for the job that you have studied the subject.
- Use reverse chronology – put your degree first where it will catch the employer's attention.
- Try to get work experience to begin on the 1st page.
- Needs a lot more detail about the skills gained, dates etc. Also reverse chronological order

- Additional skills – if going to put this in make you have some – what about IT skills, language skills or leadership.
- Interests – avoid lists like this – try and tell them a bit more and how they might be relevant to the skills needed for the job.
- Referees – who are these people? – need job title.
- Include telephone and e-mail details for referees.
- Use the space that you have – a CV should be 2 pages not 1.5.

Example CVs

More examples of CVs follow. It should be noted that these are not included as examples to be copied but to show some of the ways that CVs can be presented. Your CV should be formatted to suit the presentation of the information that will sell your skills and abilities appropriately to your target employer.

It should be noted that some of the font sizes used on the examples are quite small and it is not recommended that you use a font size smaller than 11. If you find that the information that you are adding to your CV requires a smaller font in order to fit onto two pages then look at taking out some of the information. Concentrate on showing the information that is most relevant to your target job. Usually this will make the information easier to access and will result in a better CV.

The first is the CV of an Edge Hill journalism student (name and contact details changed) who is now working in commercial radio. It works effectively by showing the breadth of relevant experience gained and the key skills developed.

CV for a Media Job

Emily Baker

68 Park Road
Black Heath
Swinford
West Lancashire
L39 9BG

Home: (01695) 274 394 Mobile: 07789 328 278

E-mail: emily83*@ hotmail.com

"Award-winning Journalism graduate looking to build on my extensive experience. At the age of 21, having worked in some of the top radio newsrooms in the country I'm eager to be given an opportunity to impress further."

Skills and Achievements

- High level of technical skills e.g. digital editing, operating the desk, ISDN Interviews and cutting soundbytes.
- Confident Interviewer. Interviews include: Olympic Gold Medallist Kelly Holmes, England International Gareth Southgate and live interview with lead singer of Reef, Gary Stringer
- Accomplished at writing news copy, vox pops, meeting deadlines
- On-air experience - presenting, match commentating and reporting, live-phone ins and news reading
- Off-air - producing shows, recording jingles, training young people in radio skills, researching news and interviews.
- Worked on award-nominated feature on 10th Anniversary of Jamie Bulger's death
- Government backed Millennium Volunteers Certificate for voluntary radio work

Media Experience

Aug 2011	Chorley Hospital Radio Match Commentator/Reporter/Guest
Jul 2011	96.4FM New BRMB Brindley Place, Birmingham
Jun 2011	100.7 Heart FM Broad Street, Birmingham
Feb 2010	96.7 Radio City Radio City Tower, Liverpool
Aug 2008- Present	Observer Fans Network Column in Sunday paper and website
Oct 2006- May 2009	WolvesMAD Website part of www.footymad.net

Oct 2005- Present	Wolverhampton Wanderers F.C. P.A. Assistant
Sep 2005	Telford FM Stafford Park, Telford
Mar and Aug 2005	Wolves TV (Broadcast on LIVE TV) Colmore Circus, Birmingham
Jan 2005 - Sep 2007	KIC FM (Kids In Communication) Various Locations
Feb 2005	WCR (Wolverhampton Campus Radio) Newhampton Street, Wolverhampton
Sep 2004- Oct 2005	BBC WM Jenny Wilkes Evening Show Pebble Mill, Birmingham
Jun 2003	95.6FM BBC WM Pebble Mill, Birmingham

Education

2008-2011	Edge Hill University BA (Hons) Journalism (Graduated with 2.2)
2006-2008	Stourbridge College, West Midlands GNVQ Media Communication and Production Advanced (Grade Achieved - Merit)
2000-2005	Kingswinford School, West Midlands 9 GCSE's Grade A-C

General Work Experience

Jun 2010- Present	Kwik Save Supermarkets <i>DJ for 'Kwik Save Fun Days'</i>
Jun 2009- Present	Edge Hill University ACE Days- Higher Education awareness raising for school pupils, TV advert and photo shoot, Campus Tour Guide Marketing Information Assistant Summer School Night Supervisor
Nov 2005- Jul 2008	Costcutter Supermarket Sales Assistant

References

James Greenfield
Journalism Course Leader
Edge Hill University
St. Helen's Road
Ormskirk
Lancs. L39 4QP

Billy Jackson
Sports Editor
100.7 Heart FM
Broad Street
Birmingham
B18 4LY

CV – traditional layout

Gary Johnson
Maple Cottage
Moss Lane
Newburgh
Lancashire
WN9 7ET

Tel: (Home) 01257 462330 (Mobile) 07798902115

Email: gaz123@hotmail.com

Dynamic business graduate with work experience in Human Resources, and logistics. Keen to develop & utilise existing skills and knowledge to gain CIPD qualification.

Education

2008-2011 Edge Hill University, Ormskirk

BSc (Hons) Business and Management Studies. Degree class: 2:1
Modules studied include: Managing Human Resource Relations, Culture and Diversity, Change & Development, Small and Medium Enterprise Management, Business Decision Making, Financial Resource Management Information Technology.

Dissertation 'What are the Motivational Aspects of the Payment System at British Telecom'. Involved in depth research into the company, observation analysis and interviews with employees.

Runcorn Sixth Form College, Halton

GNVQ Advanced Business Studies (Distinction). Units included: Human Resources, Study of the Personnel Function, Business & Legislation.

Broadway High School, Halton

Maths (C) English (C) English Lit (C) Dual Science (C,C)
Geography (C) Business studies (D) Food Technology (B) French (D)

Work Experience

2008-Present Hartley Produce Ltd, Lancashire Logistics co-ordinator.

Experience of:

- Liaising with line managers requiring tact, diplomacy, supervisory skills
- Evidence of teamwork, and time management in fast paced environment
- Able to respond to emergencies quickly, able to work under stress
- Variety of vacation jobs involving the preparation, packing and wholesale distribution of fresh vegetables

Feb-Mar 2008 United Utilities, various UK locations

Four-week placement. Experience gained:

- Working in fast paced call centre environment
- Shadowing Human Resource managers, during E-learning program
- Developed ability to oversee work of others and engage in direct helping relationships with employees.

Mar 2007

United Utilities, Warrington, Cheshire

Two-week placement. Duties included:

- Dealing with internal and external customers
- Coordinating activities with members of staff to meet strict deadlines
- Responsibility for the co-ordination of customer requirements, and marketing

Nov 2005- Jul 2006

White Lion, Runcorn

Kitchen porter

Skills gained:

- Ability to work in a team
- Time management & reliability
- Working in a pressurised environment

Additional skills

Computing I.T literate in various computer packages including Word processing, spreadsheets (Excel), and graphics, mind mapping applications as well as PowerPoint and Microsoft Outlook. Competent in the use of Internet and intranet.

Communication As a course representative I have significantly developed my communication skills. By attending meetings to discuss issues raised by fellow students I was able to provide a point of contact liaising with academic staff. This required the ability to communicate tactfully and effectively.

Driving Full, clean licence

Interests Aid in the running of a local Saturday morning children's football event, involves working with young people and taking responsibility in a team leader role. Playing and watching a variety of sports; captain and organiser of a six-a-side football team; devoted fan of the cinema; socialising with friends.

References

Dr Alison Smith
Head of Business School
Edge Hill University
St Helens Road
Ormskirk,
Lancashire L39 4QP
Email: smitha@edgehill.ac.uk

David Handlow
Dispatch manager
Hartley Produce Ltd,
Park Lane,
Parbold,
Lancashire WN9 6JJ

Skills based CV (note comment in previous section about font size)

Angela Smith
18 Liverpool Road
Southport
PR8 5ZZ

Tel: 01704 2222222
e-mail smitha190@hotmail.com

**Final year history student, with substantial work and supervisory experience,
seeking to use varied background in a sales/marketing role.**

Key skills

Team working

- Telesales experience involved considerable co-operation in working towards joint goals, supporting group members to exceed set targets for summer period by over 30%.
- Worked in teams on research assignments at university, including producing team reports and presentations to share knowledge with seminar groups – managed workload and supported other team members to achieve effective results.
- As a member of the Residence social committee teamwork was vital to organise termly events that encouraged social interaction. I took responsibility for equipment and transport arrangements.

Communication

- Required to write several essays each semester on module related topics consistently achieving high grades.
- Submitted monthly reports while at Waterstones covering order placement and supervisory issues
- Composed and researched an 8,000-word dissertation on the Poor Law, presenting some of the findings to a year group of my peers and tutors. Received First class assessment.

Problem-solving

- Final year dissertation involved identifying record sources that annotated the effect of the Poor Law on local communities and establishing effective contacts that would allow access to those records.
- While at Waterstones developed a database of customer ordering responses and contacts that automatically alerted staff of potential customer service issues.

Leadership

- Secretary of the Ski Club for two years. Involves scheduling meetings and managing the Society's paperwork and correspondence.
- Achieved the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award during sixth form. This helped to develop my leadership as well as my communication and organisation skills.
- Committed member of local history society for six years. Numerous responsibilities, including recording and collection of subscriptions, working on committee that set agendas for weekly meetings, monthly talks and organised social events.

IT skills

- Fully familiar with Windows and Windows-based programs, including Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Access.
- Experienced in the use of databases and internet based research systems.

Education

2008 to 2011

Edge Hill University

BA History. Expected classification: 2.1

Modules included: 20th Century European History, Women's History 1800-present and Crime & Society 1750-1900, Researched and prepared dissertation on "The Poor Law"

2001 to 2008

Range High School, Formby

A-levels: History (A), English Lang & Lit (A), French (B)
10 GCSEs: grades A to C, including Mathematics and English

Work experience

Summer 2010

Retail Assistant, **Waterstones Ltd.**, Southport
Responsibilities included training new staff, customer liaison on ordering desk and deputy supervisor role.

2009-2010

Waitress, **Bay Horse**, Formby
High-level customer service skills developed in pressurised environment.

Summer 2009

Retail Assistant, **W.H.Smith**, Liverpool
Demonstrated flexibility by working variable shifts at short notice.

Summer 2008

Telesales, Manweb, Warrington
Worked effectively as part of a team that exceeded sales target for period by over 30%

Additional information

- Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award – achieved during sixth form.
- Have developed conversational French through regular visits to France.
- Active member of Hall of residence social committee, organising charity fundraising events and day trips.

References

Dr A. Watson
Department of History
Edge Hill University
St Helen's Road
Ormskirk
Lancashire
Telephone 01695 575171
e-mail a.watson@edgehill.ac.uk

Ms B. Ford
Waterstones
Lord Street
Southport
PR9 OAJ
Telephone 01704 570066
e-mail: fordb@waterston.co.uk

(CV – Mature student who has large gaps in work history)

Barbara Wood

167 Liverpool Road
Ormskirk
Lancashire
L39 4QP

Tel: 01695 628143

Email: woodb@hotmail.com

CAREER AIMS

Social Science graduate specialising in Criminology, wishing to enter a career in Youth and Community work. I have undertaken modules in Community Development, coupled with relevant experience in a Youth Club and with the Citizens Advice Bureau I have developed many skills to enable me to work within the local community.

EDUCATION

2008 – 2011	Edge Hill University	BA (Hons) Criminology with Social Psychology This course involved options in criminology, crime deviance and social policy and social psychology. My dissertation looked at the relationship between poverty and youth offending.
2007 – 2008	Preston College	Access to Higher Education Course Women's Studies and Psychology. Stage B Units in Women's Studies (65%), English (70%)
2006 -2007	Preston College	Stage A Units in English and Maths Certificate in Counselling Skills
1988 – 1989	St Joseph's RC High School, Preston (Night School course)	GCE - 'O' level English (C) , French (A), History (B)
1975 – 1980	St Mary's RC Secondary School, Preston	GCE 'O' level Home Economics (C)

EXPERIENCE

Planning and Organisation

- As an active member of a school parent teacher association I am often involved in the planning and organisation of fund-raising events such as Fairs and social events.
- I need to plan my time well to fit in busy family demands with college commitments.

- Communication Skills
- My voluntary work at the CAB one morning per week brings me into contact with people from diverse backgrounds with whom I need to quickly establish rapport to be able to help them.
 - Four years of working within the Lancashire Library Service between 1977-81 in a variety of roles but all in direct contact with the public, required excellent communication skills. I also wrote a monthly newsletter of new titles into the library.
 - My course has involved giving presentations to both small and large groups. It has made me realise the need to be concise and clear when getting specific information across and increased my confidence to work in large groups.
- Leadership
- As a Course representative I liaise between staff and students on course related issues, a position requiring tact, diplomacy but a degree of firmness too.
 - I assist a local Youth Club and have led sessions relating to particular interests of mine including recently setting up a silk painting workshop.
- Problem Solving
- As the mother of two teenage daughters I often need to deal with a variety of problems at the same time whilst maintaining a sense of humour.
 - Part of my psychology project involved conducting an attitude survey, analysing data and creating an appropriate database to handle information. Some technical and people related problems did arise throughout but were rectified to take the project to its conclusion.

INTERESTS AND ADDITIONAL SKILLS

- Active member of local community group – Treasurer 2000/2001
- I design clothes for myself and also have a keen interest in other handicrafts for relaxation
- Involvement in active sports with the family, including badminton, swimming and squash
- Keen theatre-goer and have recently taken up the piano
- I enjoy driving – toured Italy and France by car as last year's holiday.

REFERENCES: Available on request **OR** Enclosed

SKILLS-BASED CV (Taken from University of London Careers Services Booklet, "How to write a CV")

Marie Sarah BISHOP

75 Weald Road, West Brisley
Kettering, Northants, NN19 8RV
Telephone 01908 117324
Email sarah.bishop@demon.co.uk

Education

- 2008 - 2011 University of Filchester
BSc in Biology: 2.1 class obtained
Including Statistical techniques Freshwater ecology
Computing techniques Microbiology
Genetics Immunology
Project Effect of water pollution on growth rates in two species of seaweed:
Literature survey Field research
Statistical analysis 40 page report
Also founder member and IT officer for the University Biology Society
- 1994 - 2001 St David's School, Burlington, Northampton
1989: A levels Biology B, Chemistry D, Geography D
1987: GCSEs Passes (A-C) in nine subjects including Maths and English

Work Experience

Full Time

- 2005 - 2008 Water Unlimited PLC, Harrow, Middlesex
Marketing Assistant for a manufacturer/importer of water treatment equipment
Job involved Liaising with suppliers and customers
Organising mail shots to prospective customers
Representing company at trade fairs
- 2001 - 2005 TGS Construction, Speedway House, Wembley, Middlesex
Administrative Assistant for a firm of building contractors
Job involved Responsibility for running the office in the absence of management
Maintaining database of customers
General office duties

Part time and Voluntary

- 2002 – date St Theresa's Church, Harrow, Middlesex
Sunday school teacher
Duties Talking to groups of children – and hopefully keeping their interest!
- 2008 - 2011 Waitrose, Main Road, Filchester
Cashier and warehouse assistant
Duties Stocking the shelves and keeping the customers satisfied

SKILLS – BASED CV: Skills discussed in paragraphs

Skills acquired

<i>Analytical and Problem-solving</i>	As part of my degree studies I regularly had to take a problem, whether theoretical or practical, identify the key components and find a logical, systematic solution. My project and dissertation required a high degree of numeracy and analysis of data using statistical techniques.
<i>Computing</i>	During my work experience I gained a good knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint. As IT Officer for the University Biology Society I was responsible for updating its web pages and membership database.
<i>Written Communication</i>	I developed good writing skills through preparing formal reports of experiments for my degree, taking minutes of meetings of the Biology Society and drafting correspondence as an administrative officer at TGS
<i>Oral Communication</i>	At university I have given talks and presentations to groups of students, and as a Sunday school teacher I have taught a class of twenty children, preparing materials and lesson plans beforehand. This taught me the importance of selecting suitable material for my audience and using appropriate language. At Water Unlimited I discussed both technical and business matters with a wide variety of customers.
<i>Interpersonal</i>	At Waitrose I worked with the public in a busy, often pressurised, situation, dealing with enquiries and complaints; at TGS I dealt with customers over the telephone and also greeted clients and sales representatives at reception; at Water Unlimited I met people at trade fairs and exhibitions, where I had to form business relationships with them and also persuade them. All this developed my ability to relate effectively to wide range of people.
<i>Teamwork</i>	At university I was one of a team of four people who founded the University Biology Society. Between us we organised fundraising events, marketed the club to students and arranged monthly meetings.
<i>Work Style</i>	I am used to working under pressure and meeting deadlines, in my work and academic studies. In both full time jobs, I frequently handled several tasks at once, a skill I also used at university, when combining studies, part time job, and setting up the new Biology Society. These different roles taught me to be efficient and organised in my daily affairs. When setting up the society, I had to be very proactive; a quality also needed in my marketing job with Water Unlimited.
<i>Business Awareness</i>	Having had two jobs, spanning seven years, in a commercial environment, I am aware of the realities of working in a business – in particular, the need to make a profit and to keep costs down. I have had experience of sales and marketing, in my job with Water Unlimited, and experience in handling office routines efficiently, in my job with TGS
Interests	I enjoy listening to many types of music and keep up to date with developments in hi-fi technology through magazines and exhibitions. I am also a keen amateur photographer and ornamental fish breeder.
Referees	Available on request

Outline of a skills- based CV (taken from get.2009 www.get.hobsons.co.uk)

Your name

Your address
Your phone number
Your e-mail

Education

Your university **September 2006 – present**
Your degree and class obtained

Explain how your course is relevant to the job you are applying for. Give a general overview or highlight the relevant modules. State your dissertation topic or project title.

Your secondary school
You're A-levels or equivalent **September 2004 – June 2006**
eg Business Studies (C), Economics (D)

Your GCSEs
Possibly including grades eg. nine GCSEs (A*-C) **September 2002 – June 2004**

Employment/work experience

Service Assistant, Hal's Restaurant, Birmingham **October 2006 – present**
Explain your responsibilities and skills gained

Sales Assistant, Shoe Retailer, Wolverhampton **December 2005 – July 2006**
Mention any skills gained that haven't already been covered

Maintenance Person, Camp Chipinew, Pennsylvania, USA **June 2005 – August 2005**
Sometimes vacation jobs or work in unusual places can make a candidate stand out from the crowd.

Agency Worker, Various Agencies, Birmingham **July 2004 – January 2005**
Summarise or group jobs together if they are not relevant
Or you have had so many you cannot list them all.

Interests

Highlight any team sporting activities, hobbies or work in the community. These show you have a life outside work and study.

Referees

Have you got room? If so, add in the name, address, phone number and e-mail of two referees. It is usual to give one academic referee and one employer referee. If you haven't got room here, simply put 'References available on request'.

You could incorporate a skills profile into your CV. This is particularly useful if you don't have any relevant employment, as you can describe the skills you have developed through other activities. You should include personal details, education history and referees as usual.

Skills

Organisation	Highlight and draw together the relevant skills you have gained from other aspects of your life, eg academic and social activities
Communication	Tell the employer about activities which prove you are an ideal candidate. Remember, the employer does not know anything about you or the experiences you have had that make you well suited for their post. Think about relevant course assignments, projects, etc.
Numeracy	Choose skills appropriate to the job for which you are applying and put them in order of priority for the job. Look at the job description or the advert; these may tell you about the employer's priorities.
Leadership	Don't waffle but provide a factual example of a situation when you have applied the skill or quality you are trying to describe
Presentation	Demonstrate good presentation in the CV. Putting something like 'excellent team working skills, numeracy and communication skills gained through course assignments' is not factual and rather vague. Compare it to the statement below:
Teamwork	'Organised a fashion show with four course colleagues. Involved in delegating tasks to group members, setting clear objectives and deadlines, and meeting regularly to monitor our progress. I was responsible for the financial management of the vent, booking the venue and negotiating the price. The event was a success and attended by over 70 people, raising £500 for charity.'
Decision-making	Briefly describe circumstances where you needed to make a quick decision, outline what it involved, the skills applied, and the outcome.
Time-management	Give examples of different situations which have developed time-management skills. Use complete sentences and keep each section fairly brief, usually no more than three or four lines.
Problem-solving	If possible, start each section with a strong, proactive word, such as 'negotiated', 'led', or 'organised'. Alternatively, use the job description to find out about the key skills or activities involved in the job.
Computing skills	Give examples of the software you have used.

Covering Letters

Apart from a situation where you are handing over a CV personally such as at a Recruitment Fair or during a visit to a potential employer, all CVs and application forms usually need to be accompanied by a covering letter.

The content and length will vary as well-designed application forms may allow you to say all you wish, but a covering letter accompanying a CV can draw together and highlight the relevant facts included in your CV and persuade an employer that you are suitable for the job. However, avoid making the employer work too hard to get to the information that tells them that they want to speak to you – keep the covering letter direct and concise.

Important considerations:

- Use plain A4 sized good quality paper
- Write on one side of the paper only
- Word-process and print out the letter – unless the employer specifically asks for a handwritten letter.
- Avoid grammatical and spelling errors – remember to proofread – spell checkers will not pick up words spelled correctly but used incorrectly (e.g. there for their or vice versa) Also remember that most spell checkers on computers are American in origin and will use American versions of spelling.
- Address it to a named person rather than “Graduate Recruitment Officer” or “Head of Personnel”. Telephone the company if in doubt of the name to use.

If you do write to a named person, then end your letter with “Yours sincerely”, if you have to begin with Dear Sir/Madam, then end with “Yours faithfully”.

- You should try to capture the reader’s attention but be concise. Remember that you are selling you relevant abilities to a potential employer, so focus on the qualifications, skills and attributes that they want in a recruit.
- You need to “convey a positive attitude” – again remember you are marketing yourself. Also remember that you are selecting the information and can avoid highlighting factors that may be taken negatively. For example, “Although I have no experience in this field my work in has developed ...” The employer will be able to judge the experience that you have from the CV – concentrate on what you do have to offer.

Structure of the letter

First paragraph

- Identify why you are writing - what job you are applying for, how you heard about it and what you are including with the letter (completed application form, CV?)
- Perhaps a brief summary of your key “selling points”.

Middle paragraphs

These should address the two main themes of:

- Why the employer should want to speak to you.
- Why you want to join the organisation and do that particular job.

This can include:

- Dealing with any negative aspects of your application – i.e. Any gaps, or poor A-level results, but remember you are marketing yourself, so this need to be written as positively as possible.
- Highlighting relevant work experience, skills or showing the relevance of your course.
- If you have undertaken research on the company, find a way of telling them. Phrases such as :

“As you can see from my CV

“I am attracted to working for you because

“My main skills include

“My studies have included

“I have relevant experience of/ relevant modules include.....”

Last paragraph

This is a last chance to try and sell your skills, experience etc to the employer.

- Summarise your suitability
- Mention you would be delighted to expand on your skills if called for interview.
- End the letter on a polite and positive note.

Useful phrases can include:

“I look forward to meeting you to discuss my application in more detail.”

“I would be delighted to expand more at interview”
”I am happy to supply any further details you require.....”
“I look forward to hearing from you”
“As you can see from the above.....”

Final points

- Proof read for spelling and typographical errors – these are only too easy to miss and can affect the perception of your application hugely.
- Make sure you have addressed the job description and person specification if you have received one. See the section above on addressing the person specification.
- If you have not received a reply within 2/3 weeks you could follow this up with a telephone call to check that your letter has been received and its progress in the system. If you have not been shortlisted then ask for feedback.

On the next few pages are examples of covering letters:

- A standard format
- A covering letter to enclose with a CV
- A covering letter to enclose with a comprehensive application form
- A covering letter you might write to apply for a job on spec – with a CV enclosed.

Standard format

Your address

16th July 2011

Mrs. A Jones
Graduate Recruitment Manager,
Elsewhere Bank plc,
39 High Street,
Manchester

Dear Mrs Jones

I am writing in response to your advertisement in Prospects Finalist to apply for the position of Graduate Trainee and I enclose my CV for your consideration.

I first became interested in retail banking during an "Outlook" programme that I attended during my second year at University. Since then, discussion with my careers adviser and my own research have confirmed my belief that this is a career which will enable me to use not only my interest in business and finance but also my skills in working with people, both in an advisory and a managerial capacity.

A career with Elsewhere Bank particularly interests me because of the high reputation of your graduate training scheme within our university, and the commitment your website indicates towards giving new recruits early responsibility.

During my time as a student I have had a variety of part-time and vacation jobs, all of which have required me to work as part of a team and to deal directly with the public. I found my work at the Tourist Information Office particularly valuable in teaching me the importance of ascertaining customers' needs and providing clear and accurate information in response to those needs.

As part of my degree course, I chose to carry out a final-year project, which involved a statistical analysis of 150 questionnaires sent to local

employers. To process this information, I taught myself to set up and use a database and felt great satisfaction in completing this project well ahead of the end-of-term deadline. Although my overall degree result was a 2.1, this particular piece of work was awarded a First.

I am available for interview at any time apart from the 12 - 24 August when I have arranged a holiday abroad and I look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Yours sincerely

John Smith

John Smith

Covering Letter for a job with CV enclosed

180 Ormskirk Road
Ormskirk
Lancashire
L39 4SS

Ms E Smith
Head of Graduate Recruitment
Joe Bloggs & Co
24 Liverpool Road
Liverpool
L1 6ET

24 March 2011

Dear Ms Smith

Further to your job advertisement for a Marketing Assistant in the "Liverpool Echo" on Thursday 26 March 2009, please find enclosed my CV as requested.

You will note from my CV that I shall graduate in the summer with a Business Management degree (2.1 forecast) having studied relevant marketing options giving me substantial exceptions from the Institute of Marketing examinations.

You will also find that I have gained experience in a small company as part of the Shell Step Programme where I gained valuable experience in identifying market sectors and potential markets for the company. My final presentation to our Senior Manager was much appreciated and they have in fact developed some of my recommendations with beneficial effects for the company.

My interest in your company was ignited when I read a local newspaper article, highlighting your continued success and outlining your vision for the 21st century. Having read your recruitment literature, I can see that the training programme will enable me to develop my skills and become an effective member of your staff.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my application further and I am available for interview at your convenience.

Yours sincerely

John Clarke

Covering letter for job where there is substantial information already on an application form

180 Ormskirk Road
Ormskirk
Lancashire
L39 4SS

24 March 2011

Ms E Smith
Head of Graduate Recruitment
Joe Bloggs & Co
24 Liverpool Road
Liverpool
L1 6ET

Dear Ms Smith

Further to your advertisement for a Marketing Assistant in the "Liverpool Echo" on Thursday 26 March 2009, please find enclosed my completed application form as requested.

You will note from my application that I will graduate in the summer with a Business Management degree – 2.1 predicted. I will also be eligible for substantial exceptions from the Institute of Marketing examinations.

I have gained experience of working in the Marketing field during my last vacation when I was selected to take part in the Shell Step Project. As the result of my work the Senior Managers of the company who are now using my ideas congratulated me. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I am available for interview at your convenience and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

John Clarke

Covering letter for job – speculative

99 Anytown Road
Ormskirk
Lancashire
L39 4QL

Mrs J Jones
Manager – Childsplay
Summer Scheme Project
St Johns School
Wigan
WN1 4BX

14 March 2011

Dear Mrs Jones

I am currently in my second year at Edge Hill University, studying for a BA (Hons) degree in Childhood and Youth Studies and I am writing to ask whether you will have any summer jobs available working at the Children's Playscheme. I enclose my CV for your perusal.

Over the past few years I have gained a great deal of experience in working with young people. I work voluntarily as a Youth Work Assistant at my Church Youth Club and as part of my degree course, I have also undertaken a placement in a primary school with children in Year 4. I have also gained experienced working in the USA as a Camp Counsellor last summer, where I was responsible for a group of young people of 11/12 years of age. I also gained experience of organising activities in sport, drama and other pursuits as part of the course.

I am reliable and trustworthy as my final report, a copy of which is available on request, from my Camp supervisors demonstrates.

I am aware that the Children's Playscheme has been running for a number of years very successfully in the neighbourhood. Some of the children I spoke to on placement at school had used the scheme and enjoyed it immensely. I would like very much to use my skills and experience to help maintain its excellent reputation.

I am available for interview at your convenience. If you require any further details please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Christine Evans

Conclusion:

Although it may seem so there should be nothing daunting about writing your CV or covering letter. There are no hard and fast rules, merely guidelines that will hopefully provide you with a basis from which to develop your own individual “marketing tool”. It is not a process to be taken lightly and it can take time while you do the research and match your “selling points” to the employer’s requirements. However, it is time well spent if it means that you are successful in landing the interview that will get you the post that you want.

Resources:

The **Download Zone** of the careers website www.edgehill.ac.uk/careers contains a link to useful videos for current students of Edge Hill. (*You will need to enter your normal Edge Hill login details to view these videos as they are protected under special licence*) In the Video section called ‘**Journey to Work**’ there is a short film about **CVs and applications**.

There are also numerous books and web sites on how to construct a CV and covering letter – here are just a few:

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/appsinterviews>

<http://targetjobs.co.uk/general-advice/applications-and-cvs.aspx>

http://www.grb.uk.com/graduate_job_advice.0.html

Books available in the LRC

Career Networking Employability - How to Get your Career on the Right Track 1998

Readymade Job Search Letters . Lynn Williams, 2009

The Art of Building Windmills – Peter Hawkins

How to get that Job! – Rebecca Corfield 2004

Brilliant CV: What employers want to see and how to say it – Jim Bright & Joanne Earl 2005

Why you? Cv messages to win jobs – John Lees 2007

Killer CVs and hidden approaches – Graham Perkins 2007

Preparing your own CV – Rebecca Corfield 2004

Ultimate CV – Martin Yate 2008

Updated Sue Norris July 2011

Edge Hill University

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Your views are important to us and help us to continually improve the quality of our services.

We would appreciate it if you could complete this form and tell us what you thought of the information we've given you.

Publication title :

Will this publication help you?

YES / NO

Did you find the information easy to understand?

YES / NO

Was the publication interesting?

YES / NO

Did you like the design of the publication?

YES / NO

Do you have any other comments about Edge Hill's Careers Centre or the information we've given?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

Please return it to the Careers Centre or email your comments to careers@edgehill.ac.uk

Inclusive Learning

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Edge Hill Careers Centre
Contact Details: Tel: 01695 584866

Website; www.edgehill.ac.uk/careers

Opening hours:

Term-time: Monday – Thursday 9.00 am – 4.45 pm
Friday 9.00 am – 4.00 pm

Vacation periods: Mon – Fri 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
(closed for lunch 12.30 pm – 1.30 pm)

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