

CV Help Sheet (Nov 2024)

Overview

- First place to start is with our [Online CV Checker](#) Additional resources on CV's also available through [Careers Connect - Jobs / Events portal](#)
- Your CV is not just a biographical account of your life to date, it is a marketing tool with which to “sell yourself” to potential employers. It gives a first impression of you – so make sure it’s a good one!
- Your CV should be a maximum of two pages in length and tailored specifically to the job and the organisation.
- If you are sending a CV in response to an advertised position, then get a copy of the job specification and make sure your application reflects every aspect of it, e.g. knowledge, skills and attributes required. [Online CV Checker](#) can help you with this!
- If you are sending out speculative applications it is important to do lots of research on the organisations and the type of work that you are looking for, to make your CV as specific as possible to your potential employer.
- Contact the company prior to sending in your CV to find out what type of work they have available so that you can reflect the skills, knowledge and attributes they are looking for.

Tips for style and layout

- CVs should be typed and no longer than 2 sides of A4 (not double sided) on good quality paper
- There is no need for a cover/binding on your CV – just good quality paper stapled at the top left- hand side
- CVs should always be accompanied by a covering letter (see the handouts on Cover Letters)
- Tailor your CV for each job/company for/to which you apply – research the job and company carefully and tailor your CV appropriately.
- Make sure your application is positive and business like. If you have a job specification, mirror the language in the job specification. Use phrases and action verbs to quantify your experience. Try to avoid using ‘I’ or ‘my’ in your CV. Use action verbs e.g. Organised, Managed, Co-ordinated, Liaised etc. See [Cover Letter tips](#) on the TU Dublin Career Development Centre webpages.
- Use bold and bullet points to emphasise your points
- ‘Chronological’ CVs are best for students and recent graduates. Other types of formats include ‘Skills-based’ (sometimes preferred if your employment is very varied or if you lack experience); Resumé – one page CV, often used for applications to companies in the USA and some European countries; Creative CVs – specifically for those working in the creative industries. See web links below for further information on these types of formats.

Tips for content:

- The heading *Curriculum Vitae* is not essential. It is best to replace it with your name using a larger font and bold print, followed by your contact details. Include your address, telephone number, eir code and email address. You should also include your LinkedIn url.
- **Date of birth, marital status and nationality** are not necessary under equality legislation (unless there are visa implications – and you want to show a potential employer that you can legally work in the relevant country).
- Your CV should include **education, experience, skills, interests/achievements and referees** sections. A personal profile/career objective section has been largely replaced by a cover letter. If you are changing career you may find it useful to include one immediately after the personal details section, in order to highlight why you don't have a lot of experience in the type of work that you are applying for.
- When including your **mobile number** make sure your message minder is activated and that your voicemail is professional. Make sure your **email address** includes your name and that you activate an out-of-office reply during absences.
- **Education** details should be listed in reverse chronological order (most recent first). Expand on your most relevant qualifications, e.g. include key course modules, projects, laboratory work and/or skills developed. Elaborate on any thesis or research work and include a list of tasks involved in carrying out that research.
- Your **employment** section should also be in reverse chronological order, unless your most recent experience is not your most relevant. In this case, you could group jobs together under the headings Relevant Experience and Other Experience. Focus on your responsibilities, achievements in the role and illustrations of where relevant skills were used or developed.
- **Tailor your skills section** depending on the skills required for the job and provide examples of where you have developed that skill. Don't forget to include the level of skill, where necessary, i.e. fluent in, proficient in, good working knowledge of, etc.
- **Group interests and achievements** under headings and expand on them. Try to relate them to the industry you are applying to, e.g. member of a professional body, participate regularly in relevant discussion groups on LinkedIn, etc.
- **Two referees** are the norm. As a student or recent graduate, include one academic and one work-related. Give their phone number and email along with their title and full contact details. Always ask for their permission first, tell them about the positions you are applying for and give a copy of your CV when it has been completed.

Preparation/follow up

- Visit the [CV Resources Section](#) on the [TU Dublin Career Development Centre website](#) for examples. If you wish to meet a Career Coach visit [Contact Us](#) to discuss your CV.
 - Ask someone to read your CV before you send it.
 - Check for spelling and grammatical errors
 - How does your experience, skills and education relate to the position?
- If you have not heard back after a week / 10 days after sending in your CV, follow up your application with a phone call.

Templates

- See the web links below for good CV examples / templates
- Use these carefully and make sure all the content of your CV is specific to you!
- Your CV is your marketing tool and the purpose of your CV is to get you an Interview.

WEB RESOURCES AND PUBLICATIONS

- [Online CV Checker tool](#)
- [Gradireland - CV resources](#)
- [Target Jobs - CV resources](#)
- [CV Templates](#)
- [Academic CV templates & resources](#)
- [Creative CV templates](#)

Ensure your CV comes up to scratch by using our [CV Resources](#)

Remember....

There is no such thing as a perfect CV but using this help sheet and other handouts from the Career Development Centre on CVs and Cover Letters will help you to present your skills and experience in the best light.