

Career Essentials

Your Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Curriculum Vitae (CV) and Resume are terms used by employers to refer to the professional document that you submit to them to describe your skills, experience and personality. The CV is essentially your self-marketing tool. It should demonstrate to the employer that you are worthy of serious consideration as a potential employee. Your aim in creating and distributing your CV is to be offered interviews.

Preparation

Which format do I choose?

With CVs, there is no one 'correct' format. Every individual you ask, and each book and website you refer to, will have different advice on how to set out a CV. Likewise, each employer will have their own ideas as to the 'type' of CV they prefer to read. This handout therefore, will provide guidelines to help you prepare a generic chronological CV.

Different industries, such as teaching, marketing or advertising will have formats of CV that they prefer. Part of your research of the roles that you are applying for will be to find out the preferences for CV style that employers in this industry prefer.

Brainstorming

You will need written information about yourself to draw from. This may require you to do a self-evaluation. List all your education, work, community and leisure experiences. For each of these, note down the activities and tasks involved, the skills you developed or enhanced and any achievements associated with each experience.

A good place to store all this information is in your Profile or in the ePortfolio on Victoria CareerHub. Victoria CareerHub gives you access to various tools to help you plan, build and manage a professional quality CV. These include a blueprint for developing CVs and CV templates.

Targeting

The next step is to determine your market audience, the person who will be reading your CV. Identify the requirements of your prospective employer, and the type of position, industry, company and culture.

Not all the information collected in your brainstorming exercise will be used in every CV you send out. You will be expected to highlight experiences and skills that are particularly relevant to the position you are applying for.

It is helpful to have a master CV. This will contain the most comprehensive information about you. This can be quickly referred to or copy and pasted from, when you are customising a CV to reflect and address the skills and interests relevant to the particular position you are applying for. Your master CV will also be invaluable for job interview preparation. Don't forget to keep a copy of all letters, CVs and documents you send to each employer.

Content

Headings

Headings are essential, as they make it easier for the employer to find the information they require. The information you decide to include will determine the headings in your CV.

It is advisable to place information under each heading in a 'reverse' chronological order beginning with your most recent experience. Have the most important information to be included in each section immediately under the heading so that it cannot be overlooked. You may wish to create additional sub-headings.

The most commonly used headings are as follows:

Personal details

Name and contact details such as phone number, email and address are essential. Make sure your email address is professional. If necessary you should also include citizenship, residency or work visa status.

Other personal details such as date of birth, gender, marital status, health and nationality are optional. Consider whether your application would be advantaged by adding any of these details.

A photo is also optional so again consider whether it is necessary for your application. If you want to include one, make sure you look professional and include only your head and shoulders

Career objective/Personal statement/Career goal

This section is optional but can be useful if you know exactly what type of position you want. It sets the scene for your CV and signals to the employer what types of skills and evidence they can expect to see from the rest of your CV. Be warned that if you make it too specific, it may limit your opportunities. On the other hand, if you make it too general, you may give the impression of not knowing what it is you want to do. Use short sentences to describe your employment goal, what industry you want to be in etc. It should be relevant to each position you apply for.

Education/Academic achievements/Qualifications

List the educational institutions you have attended, dates of attendance and certificates, diplomas or degrees gained. It is good practice to start with your most recent and highest qualification. If you are a recent graduate without much work experience, your education will be your most marketable asset, and you will want to put this section at the beginning of your CV. If your education has nothing to do with the position you are applying for, you might like to place it after your Skills and Work History sections to draw more attention to those strengths.

Tertiary – Provide details of specific courses within your degree if they are particularly relevant to the position you are applying for. Remember the structure of courses at university has altered through the years and the same subject areas vary considerably from one university to another. It is highly unlikely employers will know exactly what you have studied in the courses you have taken, even if they graduated from Victoria, so details about your courses will help them to understand how your education is relevant. If you are asked to give grades then do so; either in the body of your CV or as a separate academic transcript. Include any scholarship/awards or positions of responsibility at the end of this section.

Secondary - Don't overlook the significance of this section in your CV. This is particularly relevant if you have no work experience. Keep sections on secondary

education separate from university, plus include awards gained or positions of responsibility held. Many employers consider that a pattern of recognised ability as a young person will continue through adulthood. For mature people or those who have a longer record of work experience, this section of your CV will be fairly brief or left out altogether.

Further Training - Under this heading you may wish to include any courses, workshops and seminars you have attended if they are relevant to the position. State the title of the course, its duration, the organising body or institution and any qualification awarded as a result.

Relevant skills and experience

This section could also be headed Skills and abilities, Strengths or Profile.

Your skills are acquired at home, at work, from being a member of a committee, club, or sports team. Once developed you can then use them in any environment, industry, profession or occupation. This is why certain skills are referred to as transferable skills.

This section can be an important part of your CV, as it gives you the chance to highlight your transferable skills. Short, concise sentences relating to abilities or characteristics you feel confident about and have demonstrated e.g. communication skills (both written and oral), ability to mix well with people, organisational skills. Give a brief example of how you have demonstrated that skill so that the employer has concrete evidence of your ability.

This section is typically found on the first page of your CV as you summarise relevant experiences, knowledge and achievements in other sections of your CV.

You may want to include a Technical or Scientific Skills section for science, IT, design or other disciplines involving practical skills.

Work experience/employment

List your most recent position first and work backwards. For each position, give the dates of employment, name and location of the employer and the position title. Describe briefly responsibilities and achievements and the relevant skills you developed. Do not assume that the reader of your CV will have knowledge of the activities associated with the jobs you have had. If your job or duties were particularly relevant to the position you are applying for make this clear.

If you have worked in a number of part-time or temporary positions, it may not be necessary to list

details of every position. Some people find it easier to summarise such employment according to industry group or some other relevant form of classification.

Include any voluntary work you have done. If you have had a number of volunteer roles you might want to make this a section on its own.

If you have no paid work experience think about your community involvement, coursework, personal projects, helping family and friends and extra-curricular activities. All of these can be highlighted on your CV.

Achievements and/or memberships

This section is also optional. Achievements can refer to academic awards and personal achievements in extra-curricular and work contexts.

Mention positions of responsibility you have held, such as Class Representative, captain or coach of a team, or any special rewards received.

Interests

List additional information about yourself; eg. sporting, social and cultural interests. Give some indication of the level of your involvement such as coach, committee member or local representative. You may feel tempted to leave this section out of your CV, but employers have stressed the value they place on this information. This is how they can get an understanding of your personality, and an indication of how you may fit into their organisation and work group.

Referees

Referees are the people you nominate for the employer to speak with over the phone about their knowledge and experience of you. List 2-3 referees. These can be a current or previous employer, a university staff member, a sports coach, fellow club members and/or a family friend. You must check with each potential referee that you have their permission to be listed on your CV. It is also sensible to give your referee a copy of your CV and keep them up to date with your job search progress. Referees should not be contacted by an employer without your express permission even where you have provided their details in your CV.

References are written statements about you. If you have particularly good and relevant references, they may be worth scanning to include with your application. Alternatively you may prefer to indicate that references are available on request.

In the past written references were commonly required by employers, today however, verbal referees are requested by almost every employer even if you do have written references.

A good CV

You have a better chance of being shortlisted for interview if your CV:

- Has correct spelling and grammar. Get someone else to do a final check of your CV and covering letter. One small mistake may cost you an interview.
- Is in a font that can be easily read.
- Is no longer than two or three pages, unless your work experience warrants it or it means you will leave out information that will advantage your application.
- If in hard copy, is clear and on good quality paper. It is increasingly rare to be required to post or hand in a hard copy CV.

CareerHub Resume Builder and ePortfolio

You can make your own CV by downloading the CV template from the Resumé Builder in CareerHub. Add information under your Profile in CareerHub. Once your information is loaded, you can create different CVs without having to input the data each time.

Edit and add other relevant content according to the job you are applying for and save the CV to your own drive.

As you make changes or gain new experiences, it is important to update your Profile.

The ePortfolio function on CareerHub is where you describe, interpret and evaluate your experiences. This in turn helps you to write about your skills and experiences in your CV.

Careers and Employment

Victoria University of Wellington

Phone: 04 463 5393

Email: careers-service@vuw.ac.nz

Website: victoria.ac.nz/careers

Ref 0216

Hannah Jons

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(04) 463 5393 or 021 463 5393
Hannah.Jons@vuw.ac.nz

Personal statement

I am in my first year at Victoria University and hope to secure part-time work for up to 20 hours a week during term time. I would be available for full-time work during university breaks including the summer. I am studying for a business degree and plan to specialise in Marketing and Public Policy. I have customer service experience, a good work ethic, and an enthusiasm for acquiring new skills and knowledge.

Skills and attributes

- Strong customer service skills developed whilst working in retail
- Work well in a team and enjoy supporting and advocating for others. I am not afraid to ask for help or advice from others
- Presentation skills gained from presenting research to my peers during university classes and from acting experience in my high school drama club
- Competent in analysing statistical data and numerical problem solving
- Experienced in MS Office applications for day to day tasks including survey design, recording data, and preparing reports
 - Word (intermediate)
 - Excel (basic)
 - PowerPoint (basic)
 - Proficient with social media: Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn
- Effective writing skills developed from essay writing and project work with a good knowledge of grammar and punctuation
- Speak conversational level Māori and Mandarin.

Education

2016 – 2018 Victoria University of Wellington

Bachelor of Commerce with majors in Marketing and Public Policy

Current courses:

Introduction to Government and Politics (POLS 111); Economics and Strategic Behaviour (ECON 140); Government, Law and Business (FCOM 111); Statistics for Business (QUAN 102)

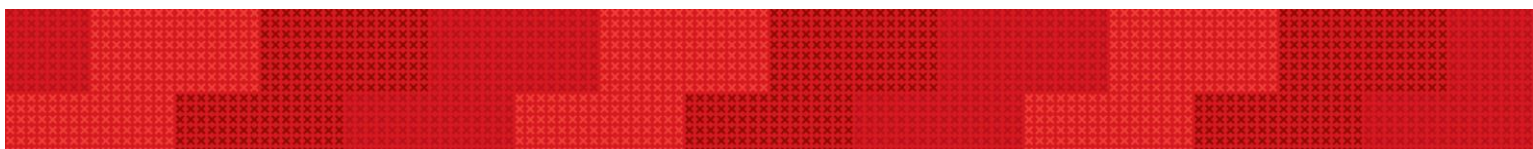
Completed courses:

Accounting (ACCY 111) A; Mathematics for Economics and Finance (QUAN 111) A+; Foundations of Information Systems (INFO 101) B+; Principles of Marketing (MARK 101) B+

2011 – 2015 St Bede's College, Lower Hutt

NCEA Level 3 with Excellences in Economics, Statistics, Mandarin

NCEA Level 2 Maths, English, Biology, Economics, Geography



Work experience

Apr 2015 – Feb 2016

Great Outdoors – Equipment and Clothing – Lower Hutt
Retail Assistant (Saturdays)

Key tasks:

- Maintaining knowledge of the store's 1400 products in order to provide reliable information to customers
- Discussing leisure activities such as camping, fishing, hunting, hiking and climbing in an informed way with customers
- Processing cash, electronic transactions and meeting sales targets
- Maintaining the store environment and assisting other team members during busy times with tasks such as stock takes and inventory checks
- Wrapping sold items and if required, arranging delivery

June 2013 – Feb 2015

Pak'n'Save – Lower Hutt
Checkout Assistant (weekends and evenings)

Key tasks:

- Greeting customers, processing purchases, electronic transactions and cash payments
- Following store procedures e.g. for the sale of alcohol and cigarettes
- Providing information to customers on the location of products in the store and store policy
- Working efficiently with team members and supervisors to ensure that customers have a positive shopping experience

Achievements

- Awarded Victoria Excellence Scholarship for 2016
- Awarded an 'excellent' by *Secret Shopper*, a 'mystery shopper' evaluation service, while working at Great Outdoors
- Top NCEA level 3 results at my school in Economics and Statistics
- Member of the winning hockey team for the Lower North Island Regional Finals in 2013 and making it to the National Finals

Extracurricular interests

- Improving my Mandarin skills by watching Chinese television channels
- Play social hockey weekly and have also run after school hockey practices for primary school students during the hockey season
- Visit the gym for a work out twice a week

Referees

Chris Church

Manager, Great Outdoors

Email chris@greatoutdoors.co.nz

Phone 478 0000

Ken Schmidt

Principal, St Bede's College, Lower Hutt

Email k.schmidt@stbedes.school.nz

Phone 568 0000

Note: All information in this CV is fictional and only intended to provide you with brief examples of possible layout and content. Please do not reproduce sections of this document and present it as your own.