

Undergraduate CV

Career Development

WHAT IS IT

This Guide is designed to help Undergraduates create a good quality CV or Resume to submit to prospective employers during their last year at University or College.

The content of this Guide is not meant to apply to medical students as their CV should be created using a different approach. Invest In Your Career can provide specific help and guidance on this alternative approach.

WHY USE IT

The prime purpose of a good quality CV is to engage the reader and to do so sufficiently to ensure the individual's application is successfully progressed to the next stage of the process.

There are countless templates or approaches for creating a CV. These Guidelines have been produced to reflect 'best practice' as seen from the perspective of an employer.

It is recommended that you think of your CV as a personal advertisement promoting your suitability for a specific job or career rather than a 'history of your life'. Just like marketing information for products and services a good quality CV should focus only on positive information and therefore exclude anything negative or information that could be construed by the reader as negative.

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

These Guidelines result from the author's research and experience across a range of large European and Global employers.

The Guide has been written using a structure around the **SCALE** acronym and some top tips that are deemed to represent best practice for a good quality Undergraduate CV. Use these tips as a guide to help realise your future success.

STRUCTURE

Structure and layout:

A good quality CV should enable the reader to easily evaluate your suitability against specific job requirements. To enable your CV to achieve this objective follow the tips given below including the recommended sequence for the actual content of your CV. The structure of your CV will benefit from:-

- Key headings – centralised rather than left hand justified;
- Margins of at least 20 mm on each side;
- Black font size, 10 to 12;
- No more than two pages in length.

CONTENT

Content:

Contact information: Your CV should be headed with your first and family names followed by

- Term time and home address;
- Mobile telephone number;
- Personal email address.

Summary Statement: This should be limited to two or three descriptive sentences designed to:-

- Summarise the focus of your expertise and special skills you can offer a new employer;
- Initiate reader interest and engagement in your application.

This concise and engaging statement should confirm your unique selling points, such as focus of your expertise and special skills. Do not write an extensive list of general abilities such as ‘hard working and conscientious’ or similar platitudes.

Example

Business Studies graduate planning to develop a sales and marketing career with a global IT organisation in a role where real value can be added to business success.

Education & Qualifications:

Part 1 – Further Education

Use “Education & Qualifications” as a central section heading followed by these central headings:-

Name of your University or College
 Title of your degree course
 Dates of your course

Followed by a two column table listing the:-

- Titles of the modules studied in your penultimate year
 - Exam results for each module
- Plus,
- For students undertaking a say a four year sandwich course which includes one or more external placements then insert -
 - Dates of Sandwich placement(s) e.g. One year placement as ‘X’ with organisation ‘Y’

EXAMPLE

EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS	
University of ABC - UK	
BA (Hons:) Business Studies and Economics	
dates	
Second Year modules:	Actual or Expected Results
• Macroeconomics IIA	1st
• Macroeconomics IIB	1st
• Business Economics 1B	1st
• Comparative European Politics	2.1
• Microeconomics IIA	2.1
• Managerial Economics	2.1
• Sociology of Popular Music	2.1
• International Business Strategy	2.2
• Business Economics 1A	2.2
• Microeconomics IIB	2.2

Part 2 – Secondary Education

Use the above as a central section heading followed the following:

Dates of your attendance

Name of your School or College

Location of school or college

A table showing subjects studied, level and results

Note:

It is not always necessary to list all the qualifications achieved prior to University but just the most recent ones. So in the case of a UK student, details of 'A' level results is normally sufficient and so it is not normally necessary to include details of GCSE results unless the employer specifically asks for these details.

EXAMPLE - for UK Student

Secondary Education			
DATES			
XYZ School			
A -Level	Actual result	AS - Level	Actual result
Physics	A	English	A
Mathematics	A	Further Mathematics	A
Chemistry	A		
Note: At 'A Level' I achieved 100% in:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Mathematics Modules and • 1 Physics Module 			

EXAMPLE - for Non UK based Student

Secondary Education			
DATES			
ABC School,			
Country			
International Baccalaureate Diploma			
Note: International Baccalaureate Diploma grades are on a scale of 7 (high) to 1			
HIGHERS	Actual result	STANDARDS	Actual result
<i>Economics</i>	7	<i>Mathematics</i>	7
<i>Biology</i>	6	<i>English</i>	7
<i>Theatre</i>	4		
+2 bonus points from Theory of Knowledge and Extended Essay			

Achievements - at University: (use a Central Heading)

Provide a comprehensive list of academic and non-academic achievements as formally recognised whilst at University. This may include positions held in university clubs particularly where specific awards or acknowledgements were achieved alternatively these may be listed under 'Personal interests'

EXAMPLE

Achievements – University of ABC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Winner - of the Model United Nations (MUN) Debating Team + date • Whitworth Medal and Prize - for highest 1st class degree and best performance in Life Sciences & Pharmaceutical module + date • Procter and Gamble Management Award - for talented scientists + date • Robert Jackson - runner up prize for academic and non-academic achievements + date

Achievements - at School: (use a Central Heading)

Provide a comprehensive list of academic and non-academic achievements as formally recognised whilst at School or prior to University. This may include positions held in school clubs particularly where specific awards or acknowledgements were achieved alternatively these may be listed under 'Personal interests'

EXAMPLE

Achievements - ABC School
<p>School President - High School Central Student Council - Sixth form year 2</p> <p>School Vice President - High School Central Student Council - Sixth form year 1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Both of the above positions were achieved through student ballots</p> <p>Project Leader - for following projects whilst in the above roles:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project managed the creation of hundreds of food and clothes aid parcels by 120 students for distribution to the local community during (date) floods. • Established a Partnership between my school and the “XXX Orphanage” designed to improve welfare standards for 300 orphans. This was achieved through a schedule of student visits plus a range of fund raising activities. • Planned and led a rural activity day for 2000 orphans culminating in delivering a thank-you speech with the Mayor of XXX. • Planned and led the School Family Fun Day raising a record sum for local charities.

Internships or Work Experience - whilst at University: (use a Central Heading)

Sandwich Course Placements:

Employers are normally very interested in students which have undertaken a period of employment as part of their University studies, especially when it directly relates to the type of employment the individual is applying for post-graduation.

Internship or Quality Work Experience Placements:

Employers normally regard good quality Internships or good quality Work Experience placements as helpful aides to the selection decision making process.

It is therefore recommended that Students place very significant emphasis on trying to secure at least one good quality Internship or Work Placement for the summer vacation prior to graduation. So for a student on a three year course this would be the summer vacation of their second year. To secure such an Internship or Work Placement the individual should apply for such placements just before, or immediately after, the Christmas of their second year. I.e. six months prior to their summer vacation.

A good quality Internship or Work Placement can not only provide valuable experience but it can also provide the 'raw material' for high quality answers to employers' interview questions. Employers' Assessment Centres for Undergraduates often include an interview in which specific competencies are explored. This requires the individual to provide examples of specific situations which demonstrate the use of such specific skills and behaviours.

Take Care: - individuals who have **not** undertaken an Internship or Work Experience / Sandwich Course placement may be concerned with their ability to provide examples when responding to such interview questions. Feel free to contact enquiries@iyc.co.uk for additional guidance on managing this situation.

EXAMPLE

INTERNSHIPS

UK Parliament

September (+ Year)

- Assisted the Constituency Teams for MP 'X' with writing press releases and letters to fellow MPs plus assisting with a wide range of constituency cases.

Company X (Global chemical company)

July - August (+ Year)

- Undertook negotiations on material prices with various suppliers and generated purchase orders ready for distribution using SAP.
- Reviewed a range of legal documents in order to correct any translation requirements and alignment with company guidelines.

Hotel X (International hotel)

June - September (+ Year)

- Responsible for a range of customer service and administrative duties including, billing enquiries plus managing general hospitality enquiries

Work Experience - prior to or whilst at School: (use a Central Heading)

Work experience gained prior to University is not essential to include in a CV unless it is the only work experience the individual has to offer or if it directly relates to the type of work the individual is applying for.

Insert the relevant information into the CV using a similar format to the above example for Internship.

Personal Interests: *Use this as a section heading.*

The final section of your CV should include details of your hobbies and personal interests. Try to include a mixture of interests including ones you do on your own such as 'reading', plus ones undertaken as part of a team or on an interactive basis such as 'scout leader' or 'hospital volunteer'.

Achievements

Achievements:

Employers are particularly interested in an individual's achievements. It is recognised however that these may be quite small in number or of limited impact given the individual's age or exposure to such opportunities.

Nevertheless, try and provide details of achievements and whenever possible try and align these to the actual requirements of the job you are applying for. This important feature will increase the reader's interest in your CV and quite likely to play an important part in determining your selection for interview.

Limit

Limit:

Limit information in your CV to only positive information. This means excluding any negative information or anything the reader could possibly regard as negative. Examples of negative information could be any connections with political groups or controversial issues.

Eliminate

Eliminate:

Ensure your CV is completely free from any misspelling, syntax or other errors as these will reduce reader interest especially if 'attention to detail' is a key requirement for the job. You should also ensure you eliminate the following from your CV:-

○ Date of birth	○ Nationality
○ Marital status	○ Headings 'Curriculum Vitae' or 'CV' or 'Resume' As it is obvious what the document is.
○ Salary Sought	○ References unless these are specifically required by employer

NEXT STEPS

We trust that this Success Guide will assist your Career development and future success.

You may find some of our other Success Guides of value for your Personal or Career Development. For your convenience we list these below and you can access the index for these via the link below:-

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- Job Shadowing
- Learning Buddy
- Mentoring
- Off the Job Development
- Personal Development
- Personal Development Plan
- Secondment
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- Training Programme
- Visit Another Department

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