

Annotated CV

CVs are very personal things. What you include, what you exclude, how you present them and how you choose to evidence what you put in tell an employer something about you. CVs can be written in two basically different ways:

- using a “skills” approach (i.e. evidencing the skills and aptitudes you have and showing how you acquired or have used them);
- using an “experience” approach (i.e. detailing the experiences you have had, jobs, employment, hobbies) from which an employer might infer what knowledge, skills, attitudes and aptitudes you have.

There are of course a range of approaches between these two extremes which utilise aspects of both approaches. The example shown here sits in the middle of this range.

A CV should be tailored to the needs of the job to bring out what you have which is particularly important for the employment you are applying for. This means you need to analyse what is needed in the job and what strengths you have which are particularly relevant.

The blue boxes highlight good and bad points and also problems with the example CV shown here. This CV shows just one example of how to present your CV.

You may also wish to include an e-mail address and your gender (if you have an unfamiliar forename), it isn't essential to include nationality but if you are not from the UK or EU your prospective employer will want to know if you have a work permit.

Degree title including if honours and university qualifications in reverse chronological order, with dates and grades (or better marks where available). Failed or re-sat modules should be included. If you don't give accurate information here and your employer finds out when taking up your references you are dead (even if you have been offered and accepted the job). You may also want to include overall grades for each year and a predicted degree grade if you are given one.

This CV has a problem; there is a gap in the dates. The applicant states that their degree is 2002 – present (2006), four years, yet only three years are accounted for. They took year 1 in 2002-2003 and year 3 in 2005-2006. Somewhere there's a year missing. Were they in prison? Ill? This raises a question about what you are trying to hide and would probably result in instant rejection.

Joanna Smith

Address: #, King Street, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG13 1HG
Telephone number: ##### (home): ##### (mobile)
Nationality: British

Education

2002 – Present University of Leeds - Neuroscience Honours BSc.

Year 3 modules to be taken

Ion Channels (1); Ion Channels (2); Receptor transduction mechanisms; Experimental project; Data Handling; Molecular Biology.

Year 2 modules: (credits)

CNS Anatomy (10) = 56%

CNS Pharmacology (20) = 78%

CNS Physiology (20) = 68%

Introduction to Molecular Biology (10)

Neurotransmitters (20) = 61%

Physiology of Absorption, Metabolism and Excretion (10) = 60%

Chemotherapy (5) = 57%

Neuroendocrinology and Reproduction (10) = 51%

Basic Data Handling and Statistics (5) = 79%

Techniques in Biomedical Science (5) = 58%

Experimental Techniques in Neuroscience (5) = 62%

Healthcare, Ethics and Law (5) = 64%

Year 1 Modules: (credits)

From Molecules to Cells (20) = 64%

How the Body Works (10) = 58%

Basic Laboratory and Scientific Skills (10) = 69%

Basic Gross Anatomy (20) = 73%

Fundamentals of Pharmacology and Neuroscience (20) = 70%

Current Topics in Biology (20) = 71%

Psychology of Sport (20) = 68%

1995-2002 Queens Grammar School, Mansfield

A levels, June 2003

Religious Studies B, Biology C, Physics C and General Studies D *AS levels, June 2002*

Chemistry C and Music C

GCSEs, May 2001

Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, English, History and Technology at grade A, Music at A*, Spanish at B

Short course GCSEs, May 2000

I.C.T at B and Religious Education at C

Employment

Module titles chosen for next year but not yet taken (shows what you are committed to). You should also include your project title, or area, if known.

GCSEs and A-levels with dates and grades (since its more difficult to obtain each group in one sitting than to pick up one or two each year for several years).

Make sure your CV is well formatted, for example here the “Employment” heading is at the end of one page and the content on the next. Also, the A and AS level results could be put on two separate lines, rather than jumbling the two together.

25 th September 2003 – present	Star Recruitment, Leeds (part-time, weekends) Agency staff, waiting and setting up for functions
4 th – 29 th June 2004	Caesar's, Nottingham Bar and restaurant staff (full-time)
18 th December 2003 – present	Red Lion, Nottingham Bar staff in the university holidays
25 th September 2003 - 18 th December 2003	People Recruitment, Leeds (part-time; weekends) Agency bar work and waiting at Leeds united football ground and Haydock Park race course
July 1st 2003 – present	White Lion, Mansfield Bar staff (part-time, university holidays)
5 th September 2001 - 18 th September 2003	Piano teacher (in spare time out of school) I taught piano and music theory to eight pupils and organised concerts three times a year
5 th September 1999 - 20 th November 2000	Rainbows, Mansfield Helper (voluntary). I helped to organise and lead games and activities for girls aged 5-7 every Tuesday
Work Shadowing	Mansfield Woodhouse GP Surgery (two days); Queen's Medical Hospital, Nottingham Clinical Laboratory (2 weeks)

Personal Statement

I am a cheerful, polite and hardworking person who gets satisfaction working both in a team and on my own. I am enthusiastic and pick up new concepts quickly allowing me to deal with any problems I face. I am ambitious, I set myself high standards and I intend to achieve my aims in life.

My aspiration is to work in a laboratory context to contribute to research that leads to finding cures for conditions such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and Addison's diseases. I have always been interested in medical conditions and when I developed diabetes, which although treatable has no cure, decided that I would love to play a part in discovering treatments and cures for illnesses which affect mankind.

Skills

- Team Working: gained through the ABCDE Award Scheme, Young Enterprise activities, playing in the brass band
- Improving own learning and Performance: gained through the ABCDE Universities Award Scheme
- Problem solving: gained through the ABCDE Universities Award Scheme
- Intermediate I.T. skills gained from Short course GCSE
- In addition to these formal skills qualifications my experience both in work and in education has enabled me to develop skills in time management, dealing with difficult situations, communications, problem solving, managing myself, organising events, responsibility, negotiation and others.

Achievements

- I was the Managing Director of a Young Enterprise Company which won the Nottinghamshire County finals and I gained distinction in the Young Enterprise examinations
- Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award
- British Association Promoting Science and Technology Young Investigators Science Awards, Bronze A, B and C

Employment and work experience: Dates should be as accurate as possible since there is a great deal of difference in, say, laboratory assistant (June to September) if it's really June 1st to September 30th rather than June 30th to September 1st. ALL work experience and employment is included. Just because you are applying for a job as a library assistant it does not mean your experience as a waiter (or whatever) is not worth mentioning. As a waiter you actually learned lots of things, to work as part of a team, to defuse difficult situations, to be there on time, to be flexible etc etc. This section can be linked to the skills and attributes you acquired or demonstrated in each job or the skills can be presented later.

Again, good formatting and presentation is essential, in this example CV it isn't easy to place the dates with the relevant job or work experience.

Personal Statement: This gives you a chance to say what you value (honesty, hard work, the environment, tolerance, high ethical standards etc) and what you aspire to (what type of job do you want to be doing in 5 years? Head of European research? Partner in travel agent firm? Manager of a superstore?). This section is a double edged sword – it says what you want but equally, it might tell a prospective employer you don't intend to stay with them for long. This section could be included in a covering letter rather than your CV.

This CV has a problem. In spite of claiming to be careful and accurate there are typos in their personal statement. They are not walking the talk.

Both subject specific skills and knowledge (e.g. lab skills, statistics, information retrieval) as well as generic skills (e.g. time management, team working, presentations, written communications) are important. You need to evidence these skills and include details of where you have acquired or used them successfully. See how the skills and knowledge learned in the formal university course, in university extra-curricular activities, in paid employment and in hobbies and other activities have all been included.

Make sure you explain any abbreviations and what an uncommon award or qualification actually means, your prospective employer may not have heard of it.

- Gold award in the UK Junior Maths Challenge and Silver award in the UK Intermediate Maths Challenge leading to participation in the European Kangaroo Maths Challenge
- One of four winners of the UK Biology Olympiad, 2001
- Grade 5 piano and Grade 5 Theory with the Royal Associated Board of Music

Interests

- Playing Trumpet in the university brass band. We play two to three concerts every year including a weekend trip to Manchester where we played a concert with their brass band
- Fitness classes, yoga, squash and the gym (usually twice a week)
- “Give it a try” sessions in the Student Union where I have learned a variety of skills such as Aromatherapy massage, Swedish massage and crochet
- Going to rock concerts and festivals
- Organising social events such as barbecues and paintballing

Referees

Mrs S Smith
Headteacher
Queen’s Grammar School
Nottingham Road
Mansfield
Notts, NG14 5DR
Tel: 01623 755856

Miss Jane Doe
White Lion
101 Station Street
Mansfield
Notts
NG19 6NE
Tel: 01623 842192

Dr Joe Bloggs
University Tutor
Faculty of Biological Sciences
University of Leeds
Leeds
West Yorkshire, LS2 9JT
Tel: 0113 3434228

Once again – bad formatting

Bright active people who make good employees are interested and involved in lots of things. Gym, societies, evening classes, voluntary work, working for a charity as well as travel, cinema, theatre, clubbing and other social activities. Give an idea of the extent of your personal interests. There is a world of difference between doing judo once a term when you remember and doing it every week, acting as treasurer for the university club and completing your black belt. If you’ve done it, flaunt it!

Referees: At least one from university (or there will be a question about what you did there you are trying to hide) and make sure they are not relatives and that all have recent knowledge of you (your 4th form teacher probably does not know much about what sort of a person you are now). Give contact details, preferably telephone as well as e-mail and a complete postal address with postcode. If you can’t be bothered to find these things out for your own CV you probably can’t be bothered to do a good job as an employee.

Ideally you should aim for a maximum of two sides of A4 for your CV.

There are many ways of laying out your CV, this is just one example, your careers service and the websites listed below will have more examples. Try to make sure when laying out your CV that the text is not crammed together and in too small a font, leave some white spaces. Your potential employer may only have a few minutes to scan your CV, try to make it easy for them to read and pull out the most important points.

Where else could you go for more information about writing your CV?

- [Prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) have a section on writing your CV, covering letters and advice about interviews and applying for jobs (go to: Jobs and Work > Applications and interviews)
- The Biosciences Federation hold annual careers conferences with a CV clinic, visit <http://www.bsf.ac.uk/careers.htm> to find out more
- Biochemistry Society education section of the website contains advice on writing your CV -<https://www.biochemistry.org/education/university.htm>
- The Student section of the Centre for Bioscience website contains some career and employability materials, including “13 reasons why I binned your CV” <http://www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/network/students.htm>
- The Institute of Biology has CV and careers advice on their website: http://www.iob.org/?tree=000_008_001_004_001_001
- BUGS (Biology Undergraduate Students) from the SEB (Society for Experimental Biology) has a variety of careers advice and links to other sites with useful information, visit <http://www.sebiology.org/BUGS/>