

CV and Cover Letters

Who are Inspiring Choices?

We support young people as they make decisions about their future education and career.

What we do:

- Run activities in schools and colleges
- Work with young people aged 15 and above
- Opportunities to consider future education options and how to achieve these
- 1 to 1 support
- Organise university campus visits



Aims of the session

In this session we are going to help prepare you for entering the world of work.

What we will cover within this session:

- How to write a cover letter
- How to write a CV
- How to complete an application form



Activity!

Free writing

Choose a prompt
from the next
slide and write
about yourself
for two minutes.

Writing prompts



Choose one of the prompts to write about:

- Write about something you are proud of.
- Write about something you would like to do in the future.
- Write about a trip you have been on.
- Write about your favourite subject.
- Write about a hobby or interest.



What is a CV?

A CV is a document to summarise your education, skills and experience. It can be used to apply for jobs or opportunities.

- Remember your CV is the first thing an employer will know about you, so it should be personal to you!
- Your CV may lead to you being invited to interview.



How to structure a CV?

Break your CV into sections

1. Contact Details
2. Personal Profile
3. Education
4. Employment/Work Experience
5. Hobbies and Interests
6. Other Achievements
7. References

1. Contact details

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CV Template

First impressions count! This is why a CV is so important, as it is the first impression an employer will get of you. This template demonstrates a basic CV layout which you can personalise to create your own!

2. Personal Profile

Your personal profile is 4-6 lines about you. Summarise yourself whilst considering the role you are applying for and making it relevant to this. Use the job description and person specification to help.

3. Education

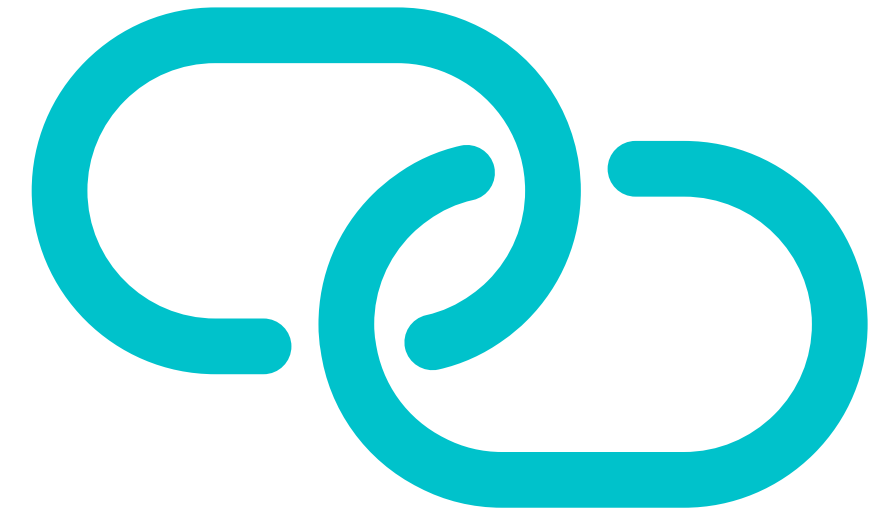
In this section you need to list your qualifications (prioritise English, Maths and any qualifications relevant to the role). You need to state the name of the qualification, the school/ college/ university, the grade and the date achieved.

Example:

GCSE Qualifications - Inspiring Choices School - Achieved 2022

- English Language - Grade
- English Literature - Grade

References



Who can give you a reference?



Can provide a reference:

- A Current or previous employer
- A Manager
- A Teacher
- A Tutor
- A Mentor



Can't provide a reference:

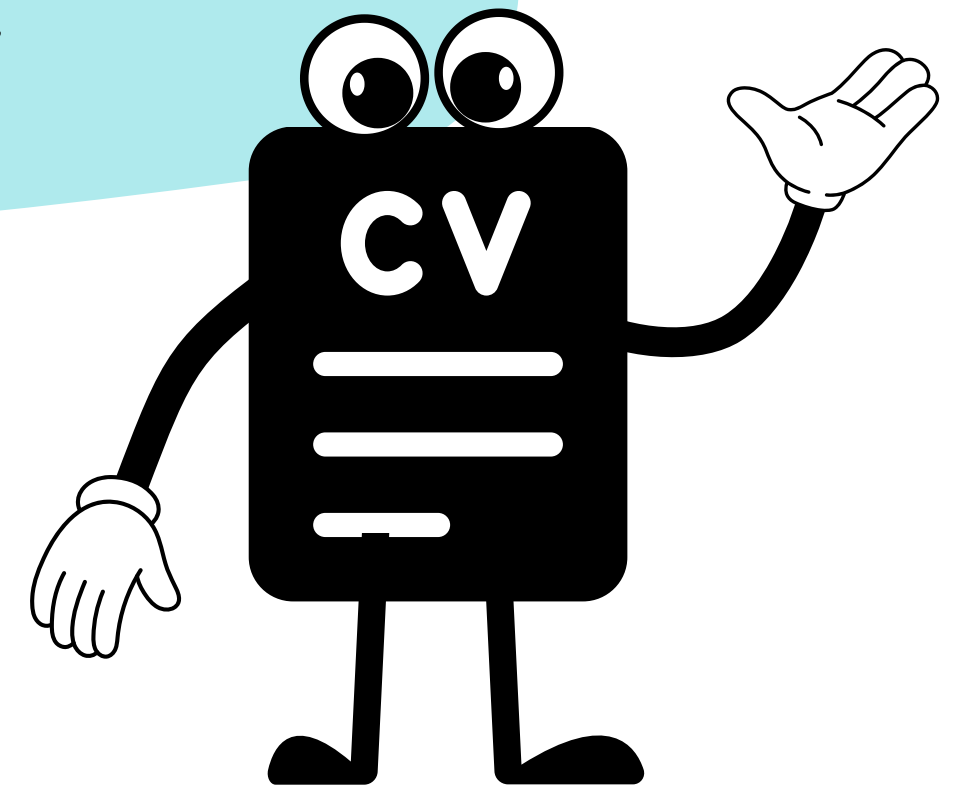
- A Friend
- A Family member (unless you work for a family business)

Remember:

Ask the individual's permission before listing them as a referee.
You can put 'references available upon request' on your CV.

CV writing top tips

- Aim for two sides of A4
- Check readability, spelling and grammar
- Tailor your CV to the job you're applying for
- Don't lie! You could be asked about your CV in an interview



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Activity!

CV Detectives

In pairs, small groups, or individually, read through the example CV and identify what mistakes the writer has made, and what they did well.

Personalise your CV

A CV should be personal to you, no two are the same.

You may find it useful to use a CV template. You can find a CV template online or create a CV template on AI. However, you should not use AI to write your CV as you might:

- Lose your own voice.
- Use standardised answers (which are easy to spot).
- Use American spellings.
- Lack personal details and examples.



What is a cover letter

You may choose to submit a cover letter alongside your CV to explain why **you** are the best person for the job.

You may want to structure your cover letter like this:

- Introduction
- 1st Paragraph: Why this company?
- 2nd Paragraph: Why this role?
- 3rd Paragraph: Why you?
- Close

How to write a cover letter

Employer details

- Hiring managers name (if known)
- Company name
- Job reference number/title

Your details

- Name
- Phone number
- Email
- Date

- Open with a formal introduction (dear)
- Clarify the role you are applying for
- Describe yourself (are you a school student?/are you at college?). Do you have any future plans?
- Describe your experience (keep this relevant to the role)
- Why are you looking for a new role? (are you interested in the sector/want more responsibility/try something new)
- Demonstrate your key achievements (this could be in your studies/extra curricular/volunteering)
- Why are you interested in this specific company? (Do your research)
- Conclusion (Share your enthusiasm and reiterate any key points)
- Sign off (yours sincerely/yours faithfully)

You can find further information about writing a cover letter on the UCAS website:



Application forms

Some employers may ask you to fill in an application form rather than send in a CV.

Remember to:

- Refer to the job description and person specification.
- Research the company and job role.
- Save your work in another document as you fill it in.
- Ask someone else to proofread before submitting.



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Activity!

Application form answers:

Take a look at the example application form and consider how you might answer the questions.

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Activity!

CV Writing:

You now have the rest of the session to work on your CV.

Postcard Feedback

- Your feedback is anonymous (no need to write your name) and helps us to develop and improve our sessions.
- If you can't think of any improvements, please write 'nothing' for question one.
- There are no right or wrong answers, please answer honestly about what you think.
- If there are any questions you really don't want to answer, it is okay to leave it blank.
- If you have any questions, please ask us.

What others have said:

"I really needed help writing a CV and I just didn't understand it properly, however this session helped me to know more about it and provided me with a CV template."

Find out more

Check out our website, and follow us on social media!



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Any Questions?