

# Effective Job Applications

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- Guidelines on producing an effective CV and covering letter – content, layout and style.
- Look at the differences between academic and non-academic CVs.
- Guidelines on filling in application forms.

- To market what you have to offer to the employer
- This is done by demonstrating your *relevant* skills and experience
- This should persuade them to offer you a job interview

- No magic formula for writing a CV - no perfect CV
- Select what is right for you and the target audience
- Aim to stand out from the crowd by personalising it
- Get the good stuff on the first page
- The layout is as important as the content –  
make it easy to read quickly
- Develop your own style

- Chronological
- Skills based
- Academic

Often includes:

- personal details
- education
- work history
- positions of responsibility
- techniques
- skills (miscellaneous); e.g. IT, languages
- professional memberships
- interests
- referees

## Pros:

- Easy for employer to read
- Relatively easy to put together
- Most common format - this is what employers expect to see

## Cons:

- Most CVs look like this – will you stand out from the crowd?
- Will emphasise gaps or if you have moved about a lot between jobs

Often includes:

- personal details
- personal profile/career objective
- skills profile; e.g. examples of networking
- education
- work history
- interests
- referees

## Pros:

- Useful if you have had a lot of work experience
- Useful if changing direction to emphasise transferable skills
- Easier for employer to read through

## Cons:

- Requires more preparation to do it well
- Can look unfocused if you haven't done your research properly
- Career aim/personal profile must be specific – if too general can be very off-putting
- Can be repetitive

Often includes:

- personal details
- education
- research interests – past, current and future
- research experience
- teaching experience
- academic service/administration
- funding secured
- professional memberships
- publications and conferences
- referees

- What aspects will interest this employer?
- Am I speaking their language?
- Consider:
  - Aims of research
  - What have you done to achieve these aims?
  - Results of research
  - Techniques used
  - Transferable skills developed
  - Relevance to position

- Avoid large chunks of unbroken text
- Use bullet points or line spaces to break the text up
- Use appropriate font & size
- Keep to same font and size throughout
- **Bold** and LARGE characters stand out more than underlining and *italics*
- NOT TOO MANY CAPITALS
- Ensure the different sections are distinct from each other

- Heading- your name not 'Curriculum Vitae'
- Balance - allocate space according to relevance of information
- Match it with an effective covering letter
- Must have a positive tone
- Keep a copy
- Check spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Get other people to proof read it

- First paragraph
  - state what you are applying for
  - where you saw the advert
  - introduce yourself (current situation not your name)
- Include clear reasons for applying – for the **post** and the **organisation**
- Back up all skills and experience with evidence
- Thank them for considering your application
- Generally 1 side A4 typed
- Send to named person

- Follow the guidelines carefully
- Complete all sections
- Don't include attachments unless requested
- Personal Statement – address each item on 'person specification'
- Use specific examples in competency questions

Construct your examples using the STAR Technique:

- **Situation**
- **Task**
- **Action**
- **Result**

- Prospects

[www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

Hobsons

[www.get.hobsons.co.uk](http://www.get.hobsons.co.uk)

- Researcher's Portal

[www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk)

*University Researchers and the Job Market*

- Top tips

[www.jobs.ac.uk](http://www.jobs.ac.uk)

