

## Creating a winning CV: Checklist for Researchers

Please see our website for further details and CV examples which can be used with this checklist.

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<b>PREPARE AND TAILOR YOUR CV</b>	
<b>Master CV</b> - start with a Master CV which contains everything (and tailor your CV for each opportunity).	
<b>Style</b> - is your CV style appropriate for the organisation/sector? Two page (most common), one page (work experience, some city jobs, some consultancy jobs), design CV, hybrid/skills based CV.	
<b>Research</b> - have you researched the organisation/sector? (websites, literature, employer contacts, company objectives/values).	
<b>Matching</b> - have you identified the core skills and qualities required for the specific opportunity/sector? Provide evidence of these throughout your CV (via the sections below)	
<b>CV STRUCTURE AND CONTENT</b>	
<b>Order of Sections</b> - <i>will vary depending on the role for which you are applying, your work experience and the stage of your career. Always tailor your CV to the person specification, referring to the job description.</i>	
<b>Name</b> (required) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big and bold as a heading – no need to write Curriculum Vitae as a title.</li> </ul>	
<b>Personal Details</b> (required) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include name, phone number, email and personalised LinkedIn address, <i>possibly portfolio for designers</i>. Optional to include <i>home</i> address.</li> <li>• International Students – include a statement about your work permission/visa at the top of your CV</li> <li>• Not recommended: date of birth, marital status, gender, photograph (not for UK, maybe for Europe)</li> </ul>	
<b>Personal Profile or Career Objective</b> ( <i>optional</i> ,) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short, targeted and realistic. A couple of sentences about who you are and what you have to offer, <i>relevant to the job to which you are applying</i>. Your unique selling points. Or your career aims</li> <li>• Include only if it adds value to your CV. It needs to be well written to impress (think abstract to a journal article – will it encourage further reading). <i>For examples refer to the Careers Network website.</i></li> </ul>	
<b>Qualifications (not Education)</b> (required, but see Order of Sections above and Relevant Experience below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add Qualifications, Institution and dates attended in reverse chronological order (it may not be necessary to include GCSEs when you have gained much higher qualifications).</li> <li>• Explain what your PhD experience brings to the role eg analytical thinking, problem solving.</li> </ul>	
<b>Work Experience</b> (required, although see Order of Sections above) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add relevant/additional/voluntary work experience (role title, organisation and dates worked in reverse chronological order), including transferable skills (or detail these in Key Skills)</li> <li>• N.B. avoid predictable role summaries; include interesting/challenging key achievements and tasks.</li> </ul>	
<b>Relevant Experience</b> – this is a useful section for researchers, it enables you to include (relevant) experience from your studies and work in one section, keeping it high on the CV and making it more targeted to the role.	
<b>Key Skills</b> ( <i>optional, or include under Work Experience</i> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include IT, language and technical skills as well as transferable skills, always tailored to the role.</li> <li>• Include Driving Licence if a requirement of the role.</li> <li>• Avoid empty clichés (e.g. good networker), be specific, give evidence and link to your experience.</li> </ul>	
<b>Awards and Achievements</b> ( <i>optional</i> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• e.g. sport achievements, academic awards, Doctoral College awards.</li> </ul>	
<b>Extra-Curricular Experience</b> ( <i>optional</i> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role title, organisation and dates worked in reverse chronological order, e.g. volunteering, societies.</li> </ul>	
<b>Positions of Responsibility</b> ( <i>optional, may already be included within Work Experience</i> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role title, organisation and dates worked in reverse chronological order, e.g. student committees.</li> </ul>	

<b>Interests</b> (optional) Include those of relevance to the employer and which sell you well.	
<b>Referees</b> (included only if requested, may already be in application form; <i>may</i> be useful on academic CV) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include 2 referees' names, job titles, email &amp; phone, include address if required.</li> </ul> <b>Or (preferable) References – available on request</b>	
<b>ADDITIONAL SECTIONS FOR ACADEMIC CV</b>	
<b>Teaching</b> (required) – provide details of any teaching experience/qualifications you have gained; list the modules you would be able to teach (refer to relevant institution's course programmes).	
<b>Research</b> (required) – provide details of your research activity as well as your area/s of interest	
<b>Funding</b> (required) – most academic jobs request this experience, if you do not have any at least find out how funding opportunities are identified and how funding applications are completed; explain you have this knowledge/understanding/awareness	
<b>Publications</b> – attach list, including conference papers/presentations as an appendix to the main 2 page CV	
<b>Administration</b> (required) – detail your experience of marking, student recruitment, committee chair/membership, exam invigilation etc	
<b>LANGUAGE</b>	
<b>Tense</b> - use past tense and avoid using 'I'? e.g. Worked collaboratively in a team... Managed a project to....	
<b>Bullet points</b> - are you using bullet points with high impact action words – e.g. Created, Achieved, Presented.	
<b>Terminology</b> - write words in full e.g. department not dept. and use technical or industry terminology where appropriate. Match terminology/language to that used in job description/person specification.	
<b>Concise</b> - Have you been concise and specific when articulating your skills and experience?	
<b>VISUAL IMPACT</b>	
<b>Font</b> – modern fonts e.g. Arial, Tahoma, Calibri, Verdana. Size 11 minimum. Best practice suggests avoiding italics, underlining and emboldening in body of text.	
<b>Headings</b> – do they stand out? Embolden/use larger font size, rather than underline.	
<b>Margins and spacing</b> - does your CV look good visually? (not too dense, good use of white space and starting new sections on a new page where possible).	
<b>Printed</b> – how does your CV look when printed? (for hard copy, print single sided on good quality paper with a quality printer).	
<b>F style reading</b> – consider the letter F; most employers read CVs across the top third of each page and down the left hand side. Ensure these areas include your most important and impressive details.	
<b>Consistency</b> - does your CV look professional and have you used a consistent style throughout? e.g. font, size of text, layout of dates, use of emboldening, headings etc.	
<b>REVIEW AND FEEDBACK</b>	
<b>Gaps</b> - have you accounted for all periods of time with no gaps in your history?	
<b>Quality Check</b> - has your CV been quality checked to eliminate any spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors? Ask other people to quality check. A simple error can lead to your CV being rejected.	
<b>Feedback</b> – your CV may benefit from feedback from a variety of sources; these can include careers professionals, people working in the industry/sector, academic etc.	
<b>Objective</b> - does your CV meet your initial objectives for the role you are applying for? Have you successfully matched your skills, knowledge and experience to the job?	

### Remember

- The CV is part of a wider process; CV, application form, cover letter, LinkedIn profile. Apply similar rules and levels of quality to these documents.
- Unusual Cases – illness, disability, repeated year, change of degree. Seek advice from your Careers Consultant or department.
- A good CV will be effective in winning you an interview invitation. However, it is always work in progress and the appearance of the finished CV is up to you.

**Current Best Practice** – taken from extensive research data of 7300 Senior HR/Line Managers, compiled by Career Management Consultants Ltd, one of the UK's top outplacement consultancies, now part of Saville Group. Contained in 'Knockout CV' by John Lees.

**Thank You** – to departments who contributed existing checklists, CN, SBE, Engineering.