

# WRITING A CURRICULUM VITAE

## ADVICE FOR POST 16 STUDENTS

### What is a C.V?

The term Curriculum Vitae (C.V.) is Latin, meaning 'from the way your life has run'. The main aim of a C.V. is to gain an interview for a job.

### If I am going to university why do I need to complete a C.V?

1. You are likely to need a job while studying (term time and/or holidays) so have a C.V. ready from day one to stand most chance of getting work before others beat you to the post.
2. A C.V. can be a useful way of leading into writing your UCAS Personal Statement.
3. Practise writing a C.V. now, because you will need to write excellent C.V.s when you enter the world of full time employment. Consider creating a LinkedIn profile, too.

### What are the key areas in a C.V. written by a student with limited work experience?

The advice is divided into:

1. *Structure* - What are the main headings and their order of presentation on the page?
2. *Content* - What should I write under each heading?
3. *Style* - In what way should I present the information?

#### 1. ADVICE ON **STRUCTURE**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Main skills (e.g. I.T., driving) \_\_\_\_\_

Work Experience \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Education \_\_\_\_\_

Interests \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### REFERENCES

1. Write 'Head Teacher' or Principal' along with the school/college address & telephone number.

2. Any relevant other referee e.g. part-time paid work or voluntary work.

## 2. ADVICE ON CONTENT

- Don't lie. You might leave out negative information but you should never lie. Your examination results must be 100% accurate.
- Provide as much evidence of your abilities and achievements as possible.
- Order your achievements by most recent, first, to least recent, last.
- If most of your achievements are from some time ago (e.g. Primary School / Year 7), it would suggest you have done very little recently.
- Prepare an account of the experiences in which you have been involved and try to think of examples of what you did that illustrate the skills you learned e.g. engaging in voluntary work requires you to expand and state what kind of work and what role you played?
- Be aware of what your interests say about you. Being a Chess addict does not suggest you are a team player, it rather points to the fact that you enjoy problem-solving.
- Provide examples, where appropriate, e.g. if you like reading, what authors do you prefer?

When you think of your selling points, try to think about four key issues:

<b>Skills</b>	<i>e.g. practical skills developed through rebuilding motorbikes, I.T. skills through part time work, meeting deadlines (excellent record of completing tasks on time in a previous part-time job).</i>
<b>Attitudes</b>	<i>e.g. motivated and determined (perhaps demonstrated by gaining the Duke of Edinburgh Award).</i>
<b>Knowledge</b>	<i>e.g. understanding of customer needs through part-time work in a busy High Street store.</i>
<b>Experience</b>	<i>e.g. part-time work on Saturdays in a electronic retail outlet.</i>

- Do not use jokes in a C.V. There is no telling whether the reader shares your sense of humour.
- Avoid using jargon (specialist terms that few would know).
- Move sections about the page to see which version has maximum effect. Balance the presentation with the content of the C.V. e.g. list your achievements soon after your personal details for maximum effect.
- Ask other students to read the C.V. and ask them to be fair and honest in their comments.

When you have finished writing the C.V. check that:

- ❖ There are no spelling errors.
- ❖ There are no typing errors. (Spellchecks do not always detect if you meant to write 'from' but instead wrote 'for'. Both are spelt correctly, though.)
- ❖ It is clear and logical.
- ❖ It tells an interesting story about you.
- ❖ There is plenty of evidence of skills and achievements.

### 3. ADVICE ON **STYLE**

- Spel (!) correctly: poor spelling suggests either you are lazy, don't wish to gain the job or have poor literacy skills.
- Use short sentences. Avoid using large and impressive words if you do not understand them, or if you expect your reader will not understand them.
- Be selective: do not write an autobiography. After all, your C.V. does not begin 'Once upon a time, I was born into the world'.
- Be aware of visual presentation; make sure the layout is clear and attractive.
- Use quality white paper.
- Avoid using 'gimmicks' like a graphic to draw attention.
- Produce your C.V. on a computer to show you are I.T. savvy!