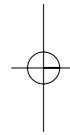




**There is no blueprint for the perfect CV but this guide will help you to make yours into an effective CV that feels right for you and for the job or career area that you will be applying for.**



**A CV should be:**

- **Your personal marketing document 'selling' your individual strengths**
- **An accurate, positive, concise summary of your qualifications, skills and experience**
- **Of a high standard in order to get you an interview.**



## Types of CV

There are several different styles of CV. The three most commonly used are:

- A reverse chronological CV (most recent events first)
- The skills based CV
- An academic CV (used to apply for academic or research posts)

The skills based format is more suitable for jobs not related to your studies, for some specific areas such as sales, marketing or advertising or in cases where you have extensive work experience or especially work experience that is not relevant to the job you are applying for.

In different countries there are other formats/conventions e.g. in the USA often a single page resume is required. Check with a Careers Adviser if you are not sure which style to use.

Examples of reverse chronological and skills based CVs are included in this booklet as well as guidelines on structuring an academic CV. Additional career specific example CVs are on the Careers Service website.

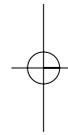
## Before putting pen to paper

**A blank sheet of paper can be daunting because what you write about your skills and experience has to impress an employer.**

**The exercise on the following page, which draws on experiences gained at university, work and during leisure time, will help you begin to gather your evidence and give you confidence that you are the right person for the job!**

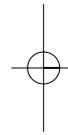
**Think of the things you have done in your life so far, break them down into the key aspects and then identify what you gained from them in terms of your skills or achievements. Always keep in mind the skills that the employer or the career will need.**

**These skills are usually outlined in a job description. If you are unsure, use the careers information at the Careers Service.**



## Key Points

- CVs should usually be no more than two sides of A4. A CV for an academic post can be longer.
- Use good quality paper, preferably white.
- Get it checked - Careers Advisers are happy to give you feedback.
- Don't send a CV with an application form unless told to do so.
- Always send a covering letter with your CV.
- When emailing CVs and covering letters
  - Include your letter either as part of the email message or an attached document
  - Follow the covering letter conventions rather than an informal style.
  - Remember to actually attach what is said to be attached and tell the recipient that something is attached. Make sure any attachments are in rich text format (or the spec asked for in an advertisement) so that recipients can open the email.
  - Check formatting and appearance by emailing the document to yourself.
  - Consider whether you need to change your 'witty' or 'cool' email address to something more professional.
- Tailor your CV to meet the requirements, skills and nature or ethos of the job. Keep it concise and relevant to 'sell' yourself, you don't need to waffle!
- When demonstrating your skills in your CV, give one/two good examples for each skill and be concise. Try and use relevant examples from different areas of your life for different skills.
- Your most recent experiences (work and study) are usually your most marketable so generally devote the most space to them. If something longer ago is more relevant to the job then make sure you 'sell' that too.
- Don't write things that you intend to do as employers want to see what you actually have done.
- Use action words to create a positive image. These are examples - try to think of some that describe you as an individual.



## Examples of CV Action Words

**Achieved**                      **Adapted**                      **Administered**

**Analysed**                      **Built**                      **Completed**

**Controlled**                      **Co-ordinated**                      **Created**

**Designed**                      **Developed**                      **Directed**

**Established**                      **Expanded**                      **Experienced**

**Guided**                      **Implemented**                      **Improved**

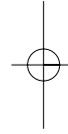
**Initiated**                      **Led**                      **Liaised**

**Managed**                      **Monitored**                      **Organised**

**Persuaded**                      **Processed**                      **Produced**

**Qualified**                      **Revised**                      **Specialised**

**Supervised**                      **Trained**                      **Transformed**



# What to Include

## Personal Details

- Contact information, name, address, telephone numbers and email address. If you have more than one postal address it can be useful to put in dates that you will be at that address.
- You don't need to show your nationality, date of birth, religion, marital status or gender unless the employer needs to know this information or you feel it would enhance your application.

## Career Objective/Personal Profile

- Optional, more commonly used in a skills based CV or later in your career when you might have considerable work experience. If you include one, say why you want to pursue this career and what selling points are unique to you.

## Education

- Degree or your most recent qualification first. Include significant achievements and a synopsis of what you've studied and what you've gained from it.
- Also consider the transferable skills you have gained from your studies - especially important if your degree is not related to the job you are applying for.

## Work Experience

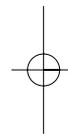
- All jobs and voluntary work are relevant if you 'sell' them correctly, say what you achieved and what your main responsibilities were, and/or demonstrate the transferable skills you used.

## Interests/Responsibilities/Achievements

- Describe what you have done in your spare time or other aspects of your life.
- Identify the skills you demonstrated through the experiences NOT just what you did.

## Referees

- Usually 2, one academic based and one work based or if latter not available a general character reference.
- Ask them first and give them a copy of your CV as this will help them write the reference about you.



# Reverse Chronological CV

## Brian Murphy

<b>Home Address</b>	6 Green Close Newcastle NA1 3DP (insert dates at this address)	<b>Term Address</b>	1 Longmoor Lane Liverpool L2 3GP (insert dates at this address)
<b>Telephone</b>	0191 202 1234	<b>Telephone</b>	0151 206 0132
<b>Email</b>	brian.murphy1@student.liverpool.ac.uk		
<b>Date of Birth</b>	15 November 1985		

### Education and Qualifications

#### 2003-2006 **BSc Human Biology; expected 2.1**

##### University of Liverpool

Course Included:  
Modern Approaches to Vaccination, Man and Disease and Science Communication. In addition to my subject courses, I have learnt how to organise my time, together with the ability to prioritise, make judgements and solve complex problems. Through my final year project I developed my analytical and research skills and also self-motivation when working on my own.

Final year project: The effects of mass vaccination programmes. This project was conducted via interviews with programme participants, healthcare professionals and pharmaceutical manufacturers. My research led to the conclusion that the benefits to the nation's health outweighed the financial costs of such programmes.

#### 1997-2003 Abbeyfield High

##### 'A' Levels

Chemistry, B; Biology, C; Physics D.

##### 'GCSE'

10 subjects including English Language, A; and Maths, B.

### Employment/Work Experience

#### 2003-present Supermarket Ltd

##### Retail Assistant

Initially I was employed as a summer relief check-out operator but soon undertook supervisory duties in this busy, inner-city store. Continuous involvement with staff and public in a variety of situations has enabled me to develop my communication, persuasive and influencing skills. In addition I am responsible for staff time-keeping and banking of up to £5,000 of cash and cheques after a busy day.

#### 2004 University of Liverpool

##### Tour Guide

I was part of a 20 person strong team whose responsibilities involve welcoming school parties to the University and conducting them around the Campus on Open Days. It was important to be able to form good relationships with a wide range of pupils and staff so that they could gain a good impression of the University.

# Reverse Chronological CV Continued

**2004  
Tapton Cross  
School**

**Student Tutor**

Assisted secondary school pupils during their maths lessons for half a day a week for eight weeks. I gained the ability to listen, understand and communicate effectively as well as being able to make a contribution to the community.

**Activities, Interests and Skills**

**University**

**Rag Ball  
Committee  
2004**

During my Second Year I was responsible for allocating tasks to Committee Members and for ensuring that they were completed to strict timescales and budget ceilings. The Ball was a great success, with over 1,000 students attending and much positive feedback.

**Computing**

Good working knowledge of Microsoft Word for Windows, Excel Spreadsheets and use of the Internet.

**Sport**

Member of University of Liverpool Canoe and Skiing Clubs. I enjoy playing football regularly in order to keep fit and relax.

**Travel  
Summer 2003**

After finishing my 'A' Levels I undertook extensive travel with four friends throughout Europe, visiting over six countries. This required a flexible approach to planning because we had to change our plans several times either because of unexpected events or in order to make the best use of circumstances. It also taught me more about working as part of a team and co-operating with others in order to achieve better results.

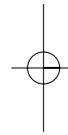
**Languages**

GCSE French and German supplemented by travel in Europe.

**Referees**

Dr G Smithson  
Department of Biology  
University of Liverpool  
Liverpool  
L69 3GD  
Telephone: 0151 794 2000  
Email: G.Smithson@liv.ac.uk

Mr S Falconer  
Manager  
Supermarkets Ltd  
High Road  
Newcastle  
NA3 2DP  
Telephone: 0191 000 5555



# Skills Based CV – Example 1

## Natasha Williams

**Home Address:** 24 Broadlands Road  
Shirley  
Birmingham  
B18 9TJ

**Term Address:** 332 University Road  
Wavertree  
Liverpool  
L15 3GH

**Available From/To:** 24/06/05 onwards

09/04/05 to 23/06/05

**Telephone:** 0121 333 4265

**E-mail:** nwilliams81@liv.ac.uk

**Telephone:** 0151 333 222

**Mobile:** 07777 123 456

### Career Objective

An enthusiastic, motivated final year arts student anticipating a high 2.1-degree in French, who is looking to build upon some practical marketing experience, gained in a commercial environment, to develop a career in marketing with a major international company.

### SKILLS

**Communication:** Taught English in a secondary school in Rouen to students of varying abilities. Learnt the importance of communicating effectively in both written and spoken forms. Gained a first class mark for final year tutorial presentations, which were undertaken in both English and French.

**Teamwork:** During the time I have worked at the Rat and Toucan teamwork has played a huge role. The bar is often crowded and, with a busy bar food operation, staff have to work together to deliver the best service under pressure. The outlet regularly wins both the regional sales and customer service competitions.

**Leadership:** As the English Assistant in Rouen I led classes of up to 30 pupils and instructed them in their studies. Used my leadership skills and position of authority if a serious problem arose in the classroom.

**Planning and Organisation:** Balancing my studies and work has developed my skills in this area. Whilst in France, I undertook a dissertation on the French political system, which entailed contacting, and then interviewing several local political figures all of whom had busy schedules.

**Computing and Numeracy:** I am familiar with databases and consider myself to be a competent user of the Internet. At Watkins and Sumner my spreadsheet skills greatly improved as I used Excel on a daily basis in the preparation of financial statements. My basic numeracy skills are sound and my mental arithmetic has been tested in my work at Watkins and Sumner and in my bar work.

### EDUCATION

**The University of Liverpool** **2001 – 2005**  
**BA (Hons) French** 2:1 (expected)

Main subjects – Modern French Language, French Translation, Surrealism and Art in French Society. Spent a year in France, at Rouen University, and completed my dissertation during this period. My year abroad increased my independence, broadened my knowledge of French culture and greatly improved my language skills. Undertaking my degree has also taught me the importance of working to deadlines and of communicating effectively in a variety of situations.

# Skills Based CV – Example 1 Continued

**Shirley School, Birmingham**

**1994 - 2001**

**A Levels** - French B, English B, History E

**A/S Level** - Economics B

**GCSE** 9 Subjects grades A and B (including English B, English Lit B, Maths B)

## WORK EXPERIENCE

**Rat and Toucan, Liverpool, Bar Team Leader**

**Nov 2001 - To Date**

Joined this busy city centre pub as bar person and have risen to team leader post. Work requires stamina, as some shifts are both long and hectic, organisational skills, as I am responsible for the effective deployment of staff and the on job training for new part time staff. I am also responsible for cashing up takings.

**Watkins and Sumner & Co, Birmingham, Accounts Assistant**

**1998 - 2003**

I have worked at this accountancy practice many times during school and university holidays. During 2003 assisted the Business Development Partner to plan and organise a series of client marketing functions including sponsorship of local music festival and kart racing evening. Working there has not only given me an excellent insight into the world of business, but also invaluable skills in computing (Microsoft Word and Excel), accounting and office administration.

**Birmingham Echo**

**Spring 1998**

I undertook a week's unpaid work experience in the picture department sometimes accompanying staff on photo assignments. I found the week an exciting introduction to the world of journalism.

## ACTIVITIES/INTERESTS

- My main hobby and passion is the cinema; I read extensively on the subject, as well as owning a vast video collection.
- I have an interest in all things aesthetic, and love visiting art galleries, museums and exhibitions. I most recently saw the Mario Testino exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery, and see exhibitions at the V & A museum regularly.
- I enjoy travelling and experiencing foreign cultures and have been fortunate enough to have travelled quite extensively in Europe and Latin America.

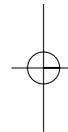
## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- I hold a clean driving licence.
- Fluent in French and currently learning Italian.

## REFEREES

Professor Marian Jones  
Department of French  
University of Liverpool  
Liverpool, L69 3BX  
**Telephone:** 0151 794 1234  
**E-mail:** mjones@liverpool.ac.uk

Mr Henry Smith  
Manager, Rat and Toucan  
Queens Square  
Liverpool, L69 4QS  
**Telephone:** 0151 123 4567  
**E-mail:** hsmith@randt.com



# Skills Based CV – Example 2

Suitable for alternative entry qualifications or if you have several jobs but not all relevant to the career/job.

## Therese Cameron

146 Old Park Road  
Birkenhead L10 1ZZ  
Tel: 0151 123 0000  
Email: cameront@hotmail.com

### Career Objective

To establish a career in HR management with a major company. This will make good use of my current psychology degree studies, my former junior HR experience and my well developed communication and negotiation skills acquired in my previous job roles.

### Skills and Achievements

#### Teamworking

- Responsible for performance of own customer service team at North West Bank, awarded 'team of the month' trophy 3 times over 18-month period.
- As part of HR team of 4 staff in Bank played full part in recruitment programme which involved attending Careers Fairs and employer presentations at local Colleges and Universities.

#### Communication

- Devised, launched and wrote articles for monthly newsletter to keep staff absent on maternity leave up to date with developments at North West Bank
- As Section Leader ensuring that all team members were aware of new direction and policies.
- Dealing tactfully with account holders at North West Bank, advising them and particularly listening to queries and responding appropriately. Using my problem solving skills to ensure a high level of customer service was maintained.

#### Negotiation

- During my time as member of Staff/Student Liaison committee at University I had to put forward students' ideas and complaints in a way that enabled the department to make changes.
- As a Negotiator for a leading local estate agency, I was responsible for dealing with financial queries and negotiating between buyers and sellers.

#### Leadership

- As senior secretary at Pearson and Sumner led team of 3 that had to provide seamless service throughout year to 5 partners.
- Promoted to Section Leader at the Bank where my section was runner up for annual sales award.

#### Numeracy/Computing

- Proficient with several word processing packages and spreadsheets including Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint through my work with all my employers and during my course. Skilled user of the statistical package SPSS for analysing data from research undertaken during my course.
- Also regular user of email and the Internet, have undertaken some basic web design.

### Relevant Work Experience

#### 1997 – 2000 North West Bank – Junior HR Officer (part – time)

Role involved recruitment of full and part-time staff, dealing with contracts, retention and maternity leave issues for 200 staff.

#### 1993 - 1997 North West Bank – Senior Customer Service Clerk (part-time)

Initially part of a team of six dealing with the affairs of over 10000 personal customers including many high net worth clients. After 2 years in role promoted to section leader (on job share basis) and then jointly responsible for operational performance of section plus appraisal, training and development of 18 staff.

## Skills Based CV – Example 2 Continued

### Other Work Experience

**1990 - 1993 Hogg & Pearson Estate Agents - Weekend Sales Negotiator**  
Responsible for seeing clients, arranging appointments, advising on properties and sales negotiations.

**1984 - 1988 Pearson & Sumner Solicitors - Senior Secretary**  
Led a team of three secretaries working for five partners. Role involved work allocation and training junior staff. Left to start a family.

**1982 - 1984 Manton Shaw Dealership - Administration Assistant and junior secretary**

### Previous Education

**2000 - 2001 Wirral Metropolitan College**  
Access Course : Subjects Studied - History, Sociology and Psychology

**1996 - 1997 Accrington College**  
CIM accredited Marketing Certificate. Modules included Marketing Fundamentals, Understanding Customers and Business Communications

**1983 - 1984 City of Liverpool Community College**  
Diploma in Office Procedures - Merit. Course included RSAII in Office Technology, Accounts and Shorthand: RSAIII in Typing and Word Processing

**1977 - 1982 Childwall Comprehensive**  
'O' Levels: English Language B, English Literature A, Maths C and four others at Grade B.

### Additional Skills

- Clean driving licence held since 1988
- Can use French well in conversation
- Qualified in First Aid

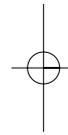
### Higher Education

**2002 -2005 University of Liverpool BSc (Hons) Psychology - Expected Grade 2.2**  
Modules include: Principle Methods and background of Psychology including Social, Personality and Cognitive Development and the application of psychology to real world issues including recruitment processes. Skills gained include: writing to tight deadlines, making presentations in seminars and the ability to prioritise and organise workload. Research programme was a field observation of Jaguar shop floor recruitment, for my presentation of the findings, involving both written and oral work; I was awarded a mark of 65%.

### Interests/Activities

- Member of Staff Student Liaison Committee for Psychology Department
- Student Member Chartered Institute Personnel and Development
- Interests outside work/university mostly revolve around my family. We go to the cinema and are active members of the local Caribbean community centre. Some evenings I work behind the bar at the centre and assist in the preparation of the accounts.
- Assist at an After Hours Kids Club at my children's school twice a week.
- Cookery and keeping fit both of which I do through evening classes.
- Reading, particularly history and classical fiction that I find is an excellent way to relax.

References available on request.



# Covering Letters Example 1

## Work Experience – Speculative Letter

Room AA.1  
Roscoe & Gladstone Hall  
Greenbank Lane  
Liverpool L17 1AH

Mrs M Bowman  
Political Editor  
Liverpool Evening Express  
1 Main Street  
Liverpool  
L1 1AA

Dear Mrs Bowman,

Work Placement Summer 2005

As a first year undergraduate student of Politics and Communication Studies at the University of Liverpool, I am looking to gain an insight into journalism through work experience on a local newspaper.

I am aware that you will have many similar requests but, as evidenced by my enclosed CV, I feel that I have the necessary skills and commitment to both contribute to and benefit from the experience of working at your newspaper.

During my A levels I contributed to the college newspaper 'Viewpoint', which reinforced my interests in becoming a journalist. My role began by writing articles about college events and led to me being the editor for this section. In this role I was able to demonstrate my communication skills, managing my time effectively whilst also motivating my team of writers to meet their deadlines.

As a regular reader of the 'Liverpool Evening Express' I particularly admire the way the paper aims to serve the local community. I also keep up to date with current affairs nationally and for my degree I have elected to take options in British Politics, Aspects of Media Power and New Media and International Crisis. This has developed and broadened my political awareness.

Through my studies I have become a competent user of a range of IT packages including Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. I also use the Internet extensively in order to research for my subjects.

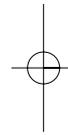
If you were unable to offer me a formal work placement I would really value the opportunity to work shadow one of your journalists for perhaps two days.

Thank you for considering my application. I will contact you in two weeks from the date of this letter in order to discuss my request further.

Yours sincerely

*C. Brown*

Christopher Brown



# Covering Letters Example 2

Specific Post/Training Programme

36 Spencer Street,  
Canning Town  
London  
NW2 7NF

12 December 2005

Mr. B Gates  
IT Services Ltd  
Striding Edge Lane  
London  
WC1E 1AC

Dear Mr. Gates

IT Development Trainee (Reference ITGP 2)

Your advertisement for the above vacancy, which was on The University of Liverpool Careers Service website, is exactly the opportunity I am seeking, and is a role where I feel that I can make a significant contribution.

You will see from my enclosed CV that your requirements match my skills and experience. In particular I have:

- Achieved 300 UCAS points at A and A/S-level (excluding General Studies) passing two subjects at A level and two at A/S level in each of my years in the Sixth Form. I am also currently on track to obtain a good honours degree in Computer Science.
- Gained an in depth knowledge of structured methods and data modelling and I have a good understanding of Oracle and SQL Server as well as operating systems, networks and programming.
- Demonstrated my excellent communication skills, having been awarded a first class mark for my 2nd year tutorial presentation at university.
- Proved my team skills in numerous situations, for example, as a member of the production line team at Pork Farms I suggested a rota system, which enabled members to change around positions to utilise their particular strengths. This enabled us to meet the Christmas target two days ahead of schedule.
- Identified what was critical to the success of the business in all the organisations I have worked. At the local General Store I successfully managed the implementation of a new stock system by training the shop assistants to use the new bar-code scanner tills, without disrupting the service to customers.

Having spoken to your representative at my University's Careers Fair I was impressed by the way that early responsibility is given to new graduates and that support is given to undertake further training. As IT Services is a highly diversified global business I believe that I will be able to exploit the exciting opportunities for career development that are offered to me and that my contribution will be valued.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my application further and would be happy to provide you with any further information needed to support my application.

Yours sincerely,

*L. Stewart*

Lawrence Stewart