


IN2015 Workshop 2

Starting the Job Search

Please fill the room from the front, leave no gaps in seats and place bags under your chairs.



Learning Outcomes

- Understand key times in the recruitment cycle.
- Understand how to get started when making placement applications.
- Apply your personal motivations (covered last week) to the recruitment process.
- Understand CVs and their use.
- Describe essential content for a CV.
- Demonstrate how to use Careerset for CV feedback.



Getting started

What are the first steps you need to take if you want to secure an internship/placement/grad job?

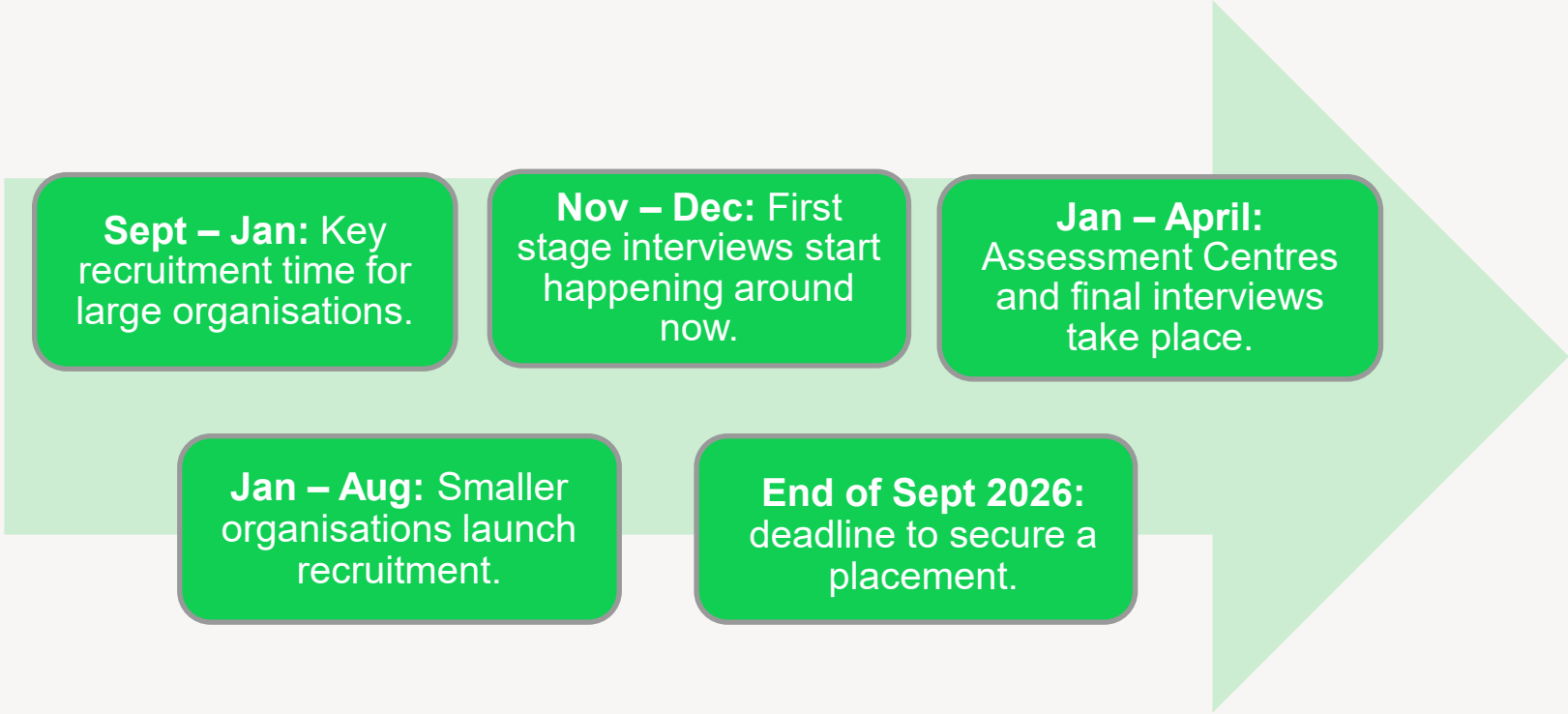
- Know the sort of role you're looking for.
- Know why you want the opportunity (what motivates you).
 - Ensure your CV is ready to send.
 - Engage with your PDIT tutor.
- Start looking for roles and register on key job search apps: [Gradcracker](#), [Bright Network](#), [Higherin](#).

Typical Recruitment Process



Motivation

Timeline



Sept – Jan: Key recruitment time for large organisations.

Nov – Dec: First stage interviews start happening around now.

Jan – April: Assessment Centres and final interviews take place.

Jan – Aug: Smaller organisations launch recruitment.

End of Sept 2026: deadline to secure a placement.



Find a way that works for you to manage/track the applications you make.

If making multiple applications, it's important to keep a record of:

- Organization name
- Job title
- Deadline & date you applied
- Any published contact details for the role
- A copy of the JD
- A copy of what you submitted
- Progress notes: i.e. outcome and any feedback

You can do this by creating a simple spreadsheet. Or, use an [online tool](#).

This information will be invaluable when companies start you contact you and invite you to interview.

Begin to prepare for the recruitment process:

- Follow companies that interest you on social media.
- Listen to business/tech podcasts such as [100 Moments That Rocked Computer Science by Durham University \(kite.link\)](#) and [The A - Z of tech podcast series - PwC UK](#).
- Join groups which are relevant to your interests: [Computer Science Society](#), [Tech meet-ups](#), [BCS](#), [City Starters](#).
- Keep up with the news: watch the news regularly, read quality newspapers, set up google alerts for relevant topics.
- Register for consulting company quarterly reports and industry publications ([IBM/Deloitte](#) etc).




All of this will inform your understanding of the industry, keep you up to date with relevant news and give you interesting information which you can feed into applications/talk about at interview.



Motivations

Last week we looked at your values and personal motivations. Now, you can apply what you learnt to the recruitment process.

- In your **CV profile**, you need to explain your motivations.
- In a **cover letter**, you have to explain why you want to work at the particular company.
- In an **application form**, you have to explain why you're the right candidate for the job.
- And most **interviewers** will ask candidates 'why do you want to work for us' or something similar.
- N.B. IN2015 A1 may involve questions about your motivation for wanting to work for the company or in the IT industry.



Motivation underpins many parts of the recruitment process.

- When hiring, recruiters need to understand a candidate's qualifications, work style and personality.
- Recruiters might also ask questions to find out what success means to you (because what you enjoy can be directly related to your ambition and success).
- Employers are trying to find out if your motivations and ultimate career goals align with the role you have applied for.
- Motivations differentiate applicants and allow employers to select the best candidate for the role.



What factors contribute to motivations?

Job fit (relates to the work you find intrinsically motivating).

- Therefore, you may be asked about your accomplishments/initiative/going above and beyond (to see if the examples given reveal the work you finds motivating).

Managerial fit (relates to how you need or want to be managed).

- Therefore, you may be asked about this to see if this matches with how the hiring manager for the position manages.

Environmental fit (relates to the culture and pace of the organization).

- Therefore, you may be asked about how you make decisions and your working style, to see if you fit the company's pace, politics and culture.

[Assessing Motivation Can Make or Break Your Next Hire — Here's How to Do It \(linkedin.com\)](#)



Activity: why did you choose to study IT?

- Think about why you chose to enrol on your degree.
- What led you to this path?
- Can you remember the factors that contributed to your decision?
- Was there someone (or something) in particular who inspired your choice?

Take a few minutes to reflect. And write 2 or 3 lines to explain why you chose to study IT.



When will you be asked about your motivation?

You could be asked why you have chosen to study your particular degree in either the application process or as part of the interview.

- This is a motivational question.
- You need to show your personal motivation for studying your degree course.
- This may link to your motivation for pursuing a career in the sector.
- You need to show that you are genuinely interested in an IT career: be original here; personal stories will help you stand-out.
- Think about what inspires you about the sector and why you want to be part of it.
- You need to prove that the role you are applying for will be an important step towards your long-term career plans.

Motivation for applying.

If you attended a job interview tomorrow for your dream company, how would you would answer the question:

Why do you want to work for us?





Common Motivation Questions


Why do you want to work for us?

- Don't copy and paste information from the company website.
- Use your commercial awareness to give specific reasons for wanting to work there.
- Try to be original, sincere and interesting.
- Refer to meeting company representatives at careers fairs and networking events.
- Show a deep level of research – know what the company USPs are, look at strategic plans, annual reports, competitor websites, news alerts, social media...
- This is applicable to your applications and for A1.

Which statement best applies to you?

- I have a CV and/or LinkedIn profile which are ready to be shared with employers.
- I have a CV and/or LinkedIn profile but they need updating before they are shared with employers.
- I don't have a CV and/or LinkedIn profile.





**Open up your CV on your
laptop and edit it as we
discuss.**



What is a CV?

- CV stands for curriculum vitae and literally means “course of your life.”
- A CV is a written overview of your skills, education, and work experience.
- It is usually the first step of the recruitment process.
- It is often the first impression an employer will have of you – ensure it is a good one. **First impressions count.**
- It is the only part of the selection process that you have full control over; you are the only person who decides what any potential employer sees or reads about you.

Essential information to include

- Full contact details
- Education Section
- IT Skills
- Employment History
- Skills Profile
- Extra-Curricular Activities/Interests
- References



*You will see conflicting advice on what to include in a CV.
This is what the CREU considers essential.*

CV: contact details layout

- DO NOT write Curriculum Vitae at the top of the page.
 - Your name should be written in a slightly larger font so that it stands out clearly.
 - The layout should be neat and concise, so it takes up as little space as possible.
 - Include your LinkedIn profile/links to personal websites/portfolios if relevant.
- N.B. these must be proofread and finalised before you add to your CV.

The diagram shows a CV contact details section for Harry Styles. It includes his name and title, address, contact numbers, date of birth, and email/social media links. Red arrows point to the left, right, top, and bottom margins, with a central text box stating: "Adding too many personal details wastes all this space".

Harry Styles | IT Manager
Flat 7 Orange House
21 Broomfield Road
Sidcup
Kent

Mob: 0777777777
Home: 02086782939
Work: 020749499494

Date of birth: 31/12/1990

harry@styles.com
[@harrytweets](https://twitter.com/harrytweets)

Adding too many personal details wastes all this space

Connie Beecham

23 Bishopsinn Road, London, SE12 4PQ
(+44)0123456789; c.beecham@lse.ac.uk

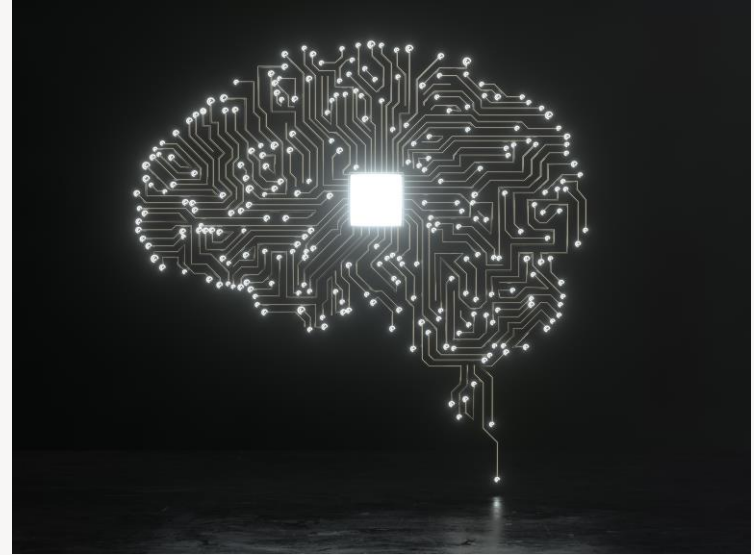


Education Section

- List your degree, including all modules (grouped by year of study).
- List A Levels (or equivalent).
- List GCSEs (or equivalent). Or, summarise .e.g: “10 GCSEs including Maths and English, grades 4-9”
- For each, include the place of study, course title and dates of study.
- List any known grades.
- Non-UK qualifications – if you can’t translate these directly then your best approach is to explain it in a way the employer will best understand its significance. Use phrases such as “equivalent to the top 5% of year” or “highest possible grade”.
- GPAs and percentages are usually recognised.

Technical Skills

- As a computing student this is a key section of your CV so it should be on the first page.
- For each skill, state if your skill level is beginner, intermediate or advanced.
- To emphasize your skills and experience, back them up with evidence (examples can be from your degree, part-time work, online courses you have completed (SSO) or projects completed in your own time).
- To keep the section easily accessible for employers put your skills into relevant groupings such as: Programming Languages, Software Packages, Operating Systems.
- Don't forget the Microsoft Office Suite.



Employment section

- Include: company name, role title and dates you worked there.
- Provide context to give employers an overview of your role and main duties.
- When listing responsibilities, focus on accomplishments that set you apart from other job candidates.
- Try to quantify your achievements .i.e. how did you help your employer to:

- Make money
- Save money
- Save time
- Be more efficient
- Solve a specific problem

Work Experience

- | | | |
|------------|---|-----------------------|
| 06-08/2014 | Ernst & Young Limited Liability Partnership
Summer intern: Industrial & Commercial Office (ICO), Chartered Accountancy | London, UK |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivered 3 audits for FTSE100 companies including ICO's largest client. Produced analytical reviews on significant movements in P&L, Balance Sheets and Cash flow statements. Attended Audit Strategy meetings with audit partner, took minutes and updated the team with prioritised tasks and assigned responsibility.• Researched and produced a report on Leisure & Hospitality market. Reported updates directly to manager. | |
| 01-06/2014 | Replay Incorporated
Sales assistant | London, UK |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worked intensively (12 hours per day in 2 weeks) to facilitate the opening of the company's flagship store in London. Cooperated effectively with the sales team to generate £8,500 of revenue on the first trading day.• Developed excellent front-line customer service by taking initiative to be proactive to customers' needs and sell add-on services. Performed under constant pressure of achieving daily sales target of £8-20,000. | |
| 08-09/2013 | KPMG Limited
Summer analyst: Consulting Department | Hanoi, Vietnam |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborated with a team of 5 to deliver the Loan Portfolio Review for The Bank for Foreign Trade of Vietnam. Acted as the first point of contact between client and the project team.• Analysed market position, industry trends and governance outlook for the 10 largest borrowers. Applied risk-management methodology to calculate the creditability of the portfolio on Excel. | |
-



What you can do if you have no work experience

- Talk about work experience that you did at school and/or college.
- Were you/are you part of a club or society?
- Have you completed the Duke of Edinburgh award?
- Have you worked on a fund-raising event?
- Are you a member of a sports team?
- Make your interests/hobbies section relevant.

Going forward:

- Think about joining the [Professional Mentoring Scheme](#).
- Try to complete some [part time work](#) or [voluntary work](#).
- Join a [club or society](#).



Transferable skills

- Adapt your CV to the specific role you are applying for.
- To do this, list all essential skills from the job description and evidence how you meet them.
- Provide personal examples of when you have utilized these skills.
- Sell yourself: what can you bring to the role that somebody else might not be able to?
- Avoid using clichés and generic statements...evidence what you say.



Suggest examples you could use to demonstrate these skills on a CV.

Communication

Verbal: Networking events, presentations, working in a customer facing role.

Written: University assignments, work for a society, part-time work.

Teamwork

Part-time work, volunteering projects, team project module, being a member of a student society, playing in a sports team.

Problem solving

Resolving customer complaints/queries, using your degree knowledge to resolve technical issues, completing project work.

Organization

Organising an event, balancing studies with part-time work, running a student society.

Every day at university, you're developing transferable skills and you may not even notice.



Extra-Curricular Activities & Interests

Employers are often interested in what you do in your free time.

Adding hobbies/interests can give an employer a sense of your personality.

Your interests may allow an employer to understand what motivates you, what personal skills you may have and how you would fit within their work environment.

Note the skills you gained and what you learnt from the experience.

NOTE: Employers sometimes use the 'interests' section of a CV as an 'ice breaker' question at the start of an interview. So, you need to be able to expand on anything you may have included in this section and be able to confidently talk about it.

Value adding information: what else do you think could be included on your CV?

- ✓ **Achievements**
- ✓ **Awards**
- ✓ **Projects**

- Give as much detail as possible: numbers, places, dates, what you did, what did you achieve?
- Include any projects/achievements that particularly relate to the role you are applying for .e.g. any games you have developed or a website you have crated.
- Other examples could include information on any charity/fund-raising you have done, business ventures, awards you have won etc.

CV Profiles

- 3-4 lines, at the very start of your CV.
- Should summarise your key strengths (relevant to the role), experiences and career ambition(s) or why you are looking for a placement/internship.
- This is your chance to grab the reader's attention and make them want to read on.
- For many, the profile is the hardest part of a CV to write.

Structuring a CV profile

1. **You:** Who you are in terms of education and experience e.g. “A 2nd Year Computer Science student from City University seeking a placement/summer internship”
2. **What:** What skills do you have? What have you achieved? e.g.: *“During my degree, I have developed excellent organisational skills due to the heavy demands of assignments with conflicting deadlines. As a result, I am able to work under pressure, especially when balancing my educational workload with my part time sales assistant job”*
3. **Career goals:** What kind of role, organisation, culture and challenges are you looking for? .e.g.: *“I am looking for a challenging, fast-paced environment within the tech industry to utilise my programming skills and further develop my knowledge of software engineering.”*

CV Profiles...

Do:

- Get straight to the point – recruiters don't like to read waffle!
- Provide evidence of your skills and experience but be brief! Offer just enough to hook the recruiter.
- Reflect the job specification in your statement.
- Read it aloud to make sure it flows properly and get someone else to check it too.

Don't:

- Overuse buzz words –too many meaningless words is off-putting.
- Mix the grammatical person – remember either first person or third, not both.
- Be boring – you want to sound unique with noteworthy qualities.
- Copy from your cover letter or copy your cover letter from your statement.



Activity

Step 1: draft your CV profile.

To start:

- * Explain who you are - *a second year computer science student /a student interested in entrepreneurship/ a student with exceptional academic performance/a keen programmer...*
 - * Explain what you're looking for i.e. SI/Placement/Part-Time work.
 - * Highlight key professional and technical skills.
 - * Include any major achievements, or key experience, awards gained etc.
-
- Formulate the above into professional sounding sentences.

Step 2: enhance your first draft.

- Earlier in today's session, you wrote 2/3 lines about why you chose to study IT.
- Can you use this to enhance your profile by stating your motivations (what do you enjoy doing, what are you seeking, what are you particularly good at).
- Review what you have written. Consider the structure.
- Now, work with the person next to you. Read your profile to one another and make any suggested edits to each other.

N.B. when applying for a specific role, refer to the JD and highlight key skills that are listed in that specific JD.



Employers will use your CV to assess your ability to write coherently and succinctly.

Adopting professional language, indicates that you can communicate professionally. It may also indicate that you have analysed essential skills of the role and understood what the employer is looking for.

Examples of words that can be used to evidence various skills:

Leadership: implemented, established, managed, directed, supervised, allocated, coordinated

Communication: presented, addressed, interacted, negotiated

Organisation: scheduled, resolved, prepared, (re) organised

Problem-solving: analysed, investigated, explored, solved, improved,

Team-working: collaborated, facilitated, liaised, consulted

Avoid vague/negative sounding words such as: basic, attempted, some, tried etc.



Information you should leave out of your CV

A photo

Marital Status

Age

Gender

Religion

Ethnicity

How you look, your marital status, your age and gender, your religious beliefs and your ethnicity are unlikely to impact your ability to carry out a role effectively.

Employers aren't allowed to decide who to hire based on them. And, however illegal it might be, you could open yourself up to the risk of discrimination by including them.

So, there is no need to include any of this information.



Applicant Tracking Systems

- Applicant tracking systems (ATS) is software used by companies to automate parts of the recruitment process.
- They usually work by scanning each CV for keywords to find the candidates that have the most essential skills.
- The software then ranks the applicants in order of suitability .e.g. if a certain qualification is a prerequisite for a job, an ATS would filter out any applicants who don't have it.
- This makes it easier and faster for recruiters to find the most suitable applicants.

Reasons why CVs are rejected:

A vague profile is the most common reason a CV is rejected. Your profile must make the reader want to read on.

70% of CVs are filtered out by ATS.
77% of employers use ATS to scan CVs for relevant keywords.

68% of CVs are rejected because of grammatical errors and typos.



CV tips

- Use keywords (from the job description) in your CV.
- Don't use tables, text boxes or columns as they often can't be read.
- Don't use headers or footers as the information might get lost.
- Use a traditional font like Calibri, Times or Arial.
- Use consistent formatting (e.g. bullet point patterns).
- Don't use images/graphics.
- Avoid any spelling errors as most ATSs will reject CVs based on typos.
- Save your file as a PDF.

Review your CV with CareerSet

- CareerSet is an online career platform that gives you personalised feedback on your CV, Cover Letters and LinkedIn profile.
- All City students have access.

Score My CV: provides AI-powered CV scoring and personalised feedback related to your CVs Impact, Presentation and Style.

Target My CV: provides actionable feedback on tailoring a CV to a specific job description, based on keywords and skills;

- This guide explains how to use CareerSet: [Info Page](#)
- You can access [CareerSet](#) via [CareersHub](#).
- We advise you to use CareerSet to check your CV, refine it and finalise it and then send it to your PDIT tutor (as a word doc) for approval.

What are the pros and cons of using technologies such as ChatGPT when creating a CV?

Pros	Cons
Time-saving: AI tools can generate content quickly.	Generic content: AI-generated content is very likely to lack your own authentic voice and may not highlight your unique experiences and qualifications.
Overcoming writer's block: AI can generate prompts, suggestions, and even examples to jumpstart the CV resume writing process.	Deviation from best practices: AI may not always adhere to current CV trends and employer expectations.
Starting point and organization: AI tools can provide a starting point by offering a basic outline for a resume which you can then build on.	Risk of similarity: AI tools gather information from various sources, so there is a chance that generated CVs may sound similar.
Organization: AI can aid in organizing information by suggesting appropriate sections and structuring the resume effectively.	Employers may check: Many employers use tools to detect AI generated content which is likely to negatively impact your application.
Spelling and grammar: AI can be used for grammar and spell-checking tools.	Ethics: Using AI in CV writing prompts ethical questions about transparency and disclosure.

Using generative AI to create your CV

Gen AI can provide a basic structure for CVs. But they should be used with caution...

- ChatGPT may fabricate your experience and qualifications.
- This is likely to be revealed during the recruitment process and will not be looked on favourably by employers.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to make sure the information on their CV is true and accurate.
- As generative AI is becoming more popular, you need to be mindful that an AI generated CV could look very similar to others.
- You will need to make your CV personal to you and ensure you set yourself apart from other applicants.
- If using generative AI to create your CV, be cautious about submitting any personal data, as whatever you put in could be in the public domain.



How can generative AI to help you create a strong CV?

- **Proofreading for errors:** CVs will be rejected for spelling and grammar errors. So, use generative AI to avoid this.
- **Enhancing content:** using text editors to avoid clumsy phrasing, cut down long paragraphs of text and suggesting more appropriate writing styles.
- **Getting Feedback:** Use AI to get feedback on your CV and use it to refine your CV.

AI tools for CVs

- Bright Network recently reviewed the best AI tools for CVs and found:
 - ✓ Best customisable CV templates: [Kickresume | Best Online Resume & Cover Letter Builder](#)
 - ✓ Best for creating a starting point: [Free AI Resume Builder Trusted by +3 Million Job Seekers](#)
 - ✓ Best for providing advice while you use the tool: <https://www.cvhelp.co.uk/>

Refer to Bright Network's [How AI can support your career journey: your downloadable guide](#)

What do employers think?

- Most employers have developed AI policies for recruitment so that their stance is clear to applicants.
- Gradcracker publish each employer's AI policy on their job adverts (look at the bottom, just before the 'apply' button):

Job ID Number: JR10344498

Can I use AI?

Our team reviews applications personally – no AI algorithms are involved in sifting through applications. We want to see your own communication skills and how you explain your experiences. We want to hear about your insights and how you link your background to what the job actually needs at Airbus. We're recruiting you for the human qualities and talents.



When discussing the use of ChatGPT to generate CVs, Robert Lingham (technical recruiter at Lever) said:

“Rather than just copying and pasting the ChatGPT-generated response as-is, use it as inspiration to build something that’s more personal and accurate to you. For example, if you ask ChatGPT to build a resume based on a job description, take a look at the skills that it pulls out, and see if they align with your own experience.”

If you do use generative AI as a starting point, you will need to check all content and edit the result to ensure accuracy and make the final CV your own.

CV check list

DO

- ✓ Keep it to 2 pages max
- ✓ Keep it clear, concise and easy to read.
- ✓ Use a suitable font size that is easy to read .e.g Arial, size 11.
- ✓ Organise your CV in clear sections with clear section headings.
- ✓ Use bullet points (makes it easier for employers to read).
- ✓ Use key words/phrases from job description that recruiters (and ATS) can pick out quickly.
- ✓ Lay out employment and education in chronological order
- ✓ Tailor your CV to the job.

Don't

- ✗ Add Curriculum Vitae as a title.
- ✗ Don't add a photo.
- ✗ Waffle or repeat yourself
- ✗ Leave huge blank spaces
- ✗ Use different font styles.
- ✗ Use text boxes.
- ✗ Use any information that might discriminate against you.
- ✗ Have any spelling or grammatical errors.
- ✗ Rely on generative AI.



Considering all we have learnt, choose the statement that applies to you.

- I have a CV and/or LinkedIn profile which are ready to be shared with employers (they cover all of the essential content and none of the content to avoid).
- I have a CV and/or LinkedIn profile but they need updating before they are shared with employers.
- I don't have a CV and/or LinkedIn profile.



For students interested in entrepreneurial work or starting their own business...

Building an entrepreneurial career

Run by City Ventures, this workshop series empowers students to think like entrepreneurs, turning ideas into actionable projects. Participants gain practical skills in problem-solving, marketing, pitching, and financial planning while building confidence and resilience. By the end, students leave inspired, equipped, and ready to explore future opportunities in business or social ventures.

Starts: Mon Oct 13th, 12:30 PM

IN2015 Assessments

Assessment 1 Professional Presentation (40%)

Hypothetical job interview.

Thurs 11th Dec (keep all day free until you are given your assessment time).

Assessment 2 Summary of Professional Development (60%)

1500 reflective report submitted to Moodle with skills analysis and evidence. *Evidence of engaging with employability initiatives and developing your skills is required ...start collating this now.*

Mon 5th Jan 2026**

More details to follow in the coming weeks.

****Please note that the A2 submission date has changed (from 4th Jan) due to City's Christmas closure period. Please mark your diaries.****



Brilliant graduate CV

Book - by Jim Bright; Joanne Earl; David Winter; Dawsonera - 2014 - Recommended reading ▼

[VIEW ONLINE](#)



How to write: successful CVs and job applications

Book - by Judith Leigh; Judith Leigh - 2013 - Recommended reading ▼



Successful Digital Marketing in a Week

Book - by Nick Smith - 2014 - Recommended reading ▼



How to write: successful CVs and job applications

Book - by Judith Leigh; Judith Leigh - 2013 - Recommended reading ▼



How to Build the Ultimate LinkedIn Profile in Under an Hour

Book - by Andrew Macarthy - 2013 - Recommended reading ▼



Online Personal Branding: Processes, Challenges, and Implications in Journal of Interactive Marketing

Article - by Lauren I. Labrecque; Ereni Markos; George R. Milne - 2011-2 - Recommended reading ▼

[VIEW ONLINE](#)



CareerAlley: 5 Tips for Creating a Professional LinkedIn Profile

Article - Recommended reading ▼

[VIEW ONLINE](#)



Digital marketing in a week

Book - by Nick Smith - 2017 - Recommended reading ▼

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