



# BUILDING A CV

Crafting a CV that works for you

I've never  
produced a  
CV before

How will  
my CV get  
me the  
interview?

When  
would I use  
my CV?

I haven't  
updated my  
CV for a  
long time

How do  
I write the  
best CV?





# Creating a CV that Works for you

Careers Wales has produced this guide to help you with advice and tips on how to put together a CV.

The important thing to remember is that a CV should reflect you, your skills, qualities, work history, experience and qualifications.

This booklet can be used separately or in conjunction with the Build a CV section on [careerswales.gov.wales](https://careerswales.gov.wales).

Also on the website you'll find advice on how to [apply for jobs](#), [interview techniques](#) and a range of [job websites](#).

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# What is a CV and when should you use it?

CV stands for Curriculum Vitae. Lots of employers still ask for one when you apply for a job.

A good CV will include personal information about your key skills, attributes, work experience, educational achievements and details of how to contact you.

Look at the job advert that you are interested in and identify the skills and experiences the employer is asking for. Where you can, include these in your CV.

A CV should be a maximum of 2 A4 pages, in most cases.

Don't just send in a CV - always provide a covering letter or email if you are applying online.

A cover letter is sent with your CV to introduce yourself, personalise your application, highlight key skills, show you fit the role, and demonstrate your communication skills.

## Tailor your CV

A CV needs to be tailored for the specific job you are applying for. It should highlight the skills and experience relevant to that position.

Tailoring your CV and closely aligning it to the requirements specified on the job vacancy helps you to stand out to an employer.

## Using Artificial Intelligence to create CVs and Cover Letters

AI-powered tools can be a great asset in generating initial ideas for CVs, cover letters, and application forms.

While using AI to help write your application is acceptable, you should not copy AI generated content. Your CV and applications should all be developed by you.

When using AI always ask AI to use UK English.

Only use words that you would use rather than AI generated words that you don't understand. Make sure you tailor your CV to the specific role and company you are applying for.

Employers can detect when you create a CV that includes a lot of AI content.

An employer might reject you because of this. They do this because they would rather the CV was the applicant's own work.

# What to include in your CV

## Personal details

- Use an email address that sounds professional, for example john.jones@myemail.com and that you check regularly
- Include your LinkedIn URL, if you have one
- Include a relevant contact telephone number
- You do not need to include your home address, or date of birth

## Personal profile

- Your Personal Profile needs to be tailored to the role you are applying for
- Depending on your experience the length of the profile will vary between 4 – 8 lines
- You need to highlight your personal qualities/ attributes, skills and experiences that match the role

### What is a quality/attribute?

A distinctive characteristic or feature that you have, for example, honesty.

How would a former employer or educator describe you?

### What is a skill?

The ability to do something well, usually gained through practise, or experience, for example, team working.

Look at your work experience and hobbies. What skills did you use to carry out the tasks and responsibilities?

- If you are struggling to identify your skills and strengths, visit [careerswales.gov.wales](https://careerswales.gov.wales) and complete our **Buzz Quiz**





## Employment

Start with your most recent job and work backwards, this is known as chronological order.

You only need to go back 10 years. (When tailoring your CV to a specific job, this rule may not apply. A role you had over ten years ago may demonstrate the skills you need to do the job you are applying for, so include it).

Include:

- Employer's Name, Town/City
- Start and end dates (month and year are acceptable)
- Job role/s
- A description of the duties you undertook in bullet point format. (Think of your responsibilities and break them down into daily, weekly, monthly etc.)

## Volunteering and Work Experience

Voluntary work or unpaid work experience can add value to your CV. They show employers extra skills and experience you have gained. Include:

- Name of the charity or employer, Town/City
- Start and end dates (month and year are acceptable)
- A description of the duties you undertook in bullet point format

## Education and Qualifications

- List your education establishments, Town/City
- Start and end dates (month and year are acceptable)
- List your subjects and qualifications achieved

## Training/Achievements

Include all training undertaken including in-house training, if they are relevant to the job you are applying for. For example:

- Driving Licence
- Languages eg; Welsh and ESOL
- British Sign Language
- Food Hygiene
- Health and Safety

## Skills

Include transferable skills and skills relevant to the job advert and person specification.

For example:

- Team and Lone Working skills
- Communication and Listening skills
- Organisational skills
- Computer literacy skills, confident using Microsoft packages, Email and Internet

## Hobbies and Interests

Your hobbies/interests may tell an employer more about you.

## References

At the bottom of your CV write **References Available On Request**

Most employers ask you to provide at least 2 references. Ask your referees if they are happy to give you a reference. Do not include referee details on your CV, just have them ready.

Possible referees could include an employer - past or present, teacher, tutor or lecturer etc. Someone you know that can give you a character reference, but not a relative.



# Getting through the Application Tracking Sift (ATS)

Some companies use ATS to sift CVs, cover letters and application forms to decide whether you get through to the next stage.

The software is tailored to the job specification and scans your CV, cover letter and application form. It looks for the information that matches the job requirements.

## Top tips to get past ATS:

- Include keywords that match the job advert within your skills and experience sections and your personal profile. (If you are able to demonstrate you have them)
- Create your CV on a Word Doc
- You can save your CV in PDF format, but don't save as a scanned image because the software cannot read these

## ATS only detects the following:

- Arial/Calibri/Times New Roman font style, font size 11/12 and black ink
- It does not detect colour, images, tables and graphs



# Different Types of CV

## Chronological CV

- A chronological CV matches your work experience and qualifications to the job you're applying for
- The format clearly shows your work history, responsibilities, achievements, and relevant education
- Employment and education details should be listed from most recent to oldest, in chronological order

## Skills-based CV

- A skills-based CV is useful if you have gaps in your work history or limited work experience. It's also useful when applying for a job in a different sector from the one you've been working in
- This type of CV focuses on the skills you've developed in different areas of your life; these are called transferable skills
- The key is to highlight your skills that match those required in the job advert or description

You can find a [varied range of CV examples and templates](#) on our website including academic, technical and school leaver examples/templates.





## Joe Bloggs

Mobile - 07111 111111

joebloggs@yahoo.com

LinkedIn.com/in/bloggs

### Personal Profile

A successful Catering Manager with 17 years' experience in the food services sector. A proven team leader with a track-record of turning less profitable catering outlets into successful ones. Extensive experience of mentoring junior colleagues, ensuring support, motivation and guidance is provided. A highly organised and motivated individual, keen to continue to thrive and develop within a successful, multi-national business.

### Skills and Achievements

- Full, clean UK Driving Licence, with own transport
- Food Hygiene level 2
- First Aid at Work
- Health and Safety awareness
- Time Management and Organisational skills
- Communication and Listening skills, fluent in Welsh and English
- Leadership skills
- Team and Lone working skills
- Problem solving skills

### Employment History

Sainsbury, Cardiff

2016 – present

Area Manager

- Managing a group of 12 catering outlets within the region
- Increased productivity by 15% overall between 2017-2022 in local branches
- Reduced food waste by 10% overall across outlets by introducing end-of-day discounts on high turn-over products
- Improving staff retention by introducing a range of incentives and awards for staff
- Planning sales promotions and assessing their effectiveness
- Assessing performance against sales targets
- Allocating and monitoring individual budgets
- Implementing improvement plans in collaboration with local managers and staff
- Training and mentoring prospective managers within the company

Starbucks, Swansea

2013 - 2016

Outlet Manager

- Supervised a team of staff, including management of shift rota
- Assessed stock levels and ordering new stock
- Managed stock-take and cash in and out of the store
- Trained new and existing staff on all aspects of work within the shop, including food hygiene and health and safety

Nandos, Swansea

2012 - 2013

Shift Supervisor

- Supervised and trained staff on all aspects of work, including health and safety
- Cashed up as required
- Prepared food
- Served customers
- Cleaned the kitchen area and shop front areas
- Adhered to all health and safety and hygiene procedures

Jenkins Bakers, Llanelli

2005 - 2012

Team Member

- Prepared a range of food, including pies, cakes and bread
- Served customers and taking payments
- Cleaned the kitchen and shop front areas
- Adhered to all health and safety and hygiene procedures

## **Education and Qualifications**

Leadership and Training Solutions

2020 - 2021

NVQ Level 5 Leadership and Management - Distinction

Carmarthenshire Academy

2000 - 2007

3 A-levels - English A, Politics B, History C

9 GCSEs - Grade C and above including English, Maths and science

## **Awards**

Sainsbury Manager of the Year Award 2021

## **Hobbies and Interests**

Member of the Cardiff Rotary Club

**References Available On Request**

### **Joe Bloggs**

Mobile - 07111 111111

joebloggs@yahoo.com

### **Personal Profile**

A hard-working and motivated individual with several years employment and voluntary experience. Possesses a range of administrative and ICT skills including competent use of MS-Office 365, effective report writing, organisation and time management. An effective team worker and leader who engages well with people of all ages and from diverse backgrounds, utilising good communication and listening skills.

### **Skills**

#### **Communication**

- Report writing as Care Supervisor at Barchester Care Home
- Minute taking of meetings as Secretary of a local children's charity
- Producing assignments to a high standard during Health and Social Care training
- Leading discussions during trustee meetings as Charity Secretary
- Providing directions and local information to visitors to Crofts Country Park

#### **ICT Skills**

- Competent user of MS-Office 365 Suite, including Word, Outlook, PowerPoint and Excel
- Used in-house database package to record case work whilst at Barchester Care Home

#### **Organisational Skills**

- Coordinating fund-raising events and children's parties
- Organising activities for service users, including hobbycraft and cooking evenings

#### **Team Working**

- Collaborating with colleagues at Crofts Country Park and sharing work tasks
- Effective team player within a large team of care staff

## **Employment History**

Barchester Care Home, Wrexham

2016 - 2021

Care Supervisor

- Effective and supportive supervision of a team of care assistants and using Microsoft Excel to create staff rotas
- Provided training to staff on issues such as health and safety and manual handling
- Recorded case work and generated management reports using Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Access
- Provided excellent care to service users
- Organised social activities for service users

Helping Hands, Wrexham

2013 - 2018

Care Assistant

- Provided excellent personal care
- Organised recreational activities for service users

Crofts Country Park, Wrexham

1992 - 2013

Groundsman

- Cut grass, trees, shrubs and hedges, using industrial garden tools and equipment
- Provided excellent customer service to visitors

## **Voluntary Work**

Prime Cymru, Wrexham

1994 - present

Secretary and Events Organiser

- Maintaining organisational records and membership lists
- Assisting with administrative tasks such as handling emails and letters
- Communicating and liaising with vendors and participants
- Developing event plans, managing budgets, and logistics
- Managing event setup and execution
- Recruiting, training, and supervising volunteers
- Promoting events through social media and flyers

## **Education and Qualifications**

Wrexham College

2014 - 2016

Diploma Level 4 in Health and Social Care - Merit/Distinction

Diploma Level 3 in Health and Social Care - Distinction

Wrexham High School

1985 - 1990

10 GCSEs including Woodwork A, English Language C, Double Science CC

**References Available On Request**

# Covering Letter

You will usually need to email or send a cover letter with your CV (and sometimes with an application form). More and more employers are using the cover letter to determine suitability.

A covering email or letter is important as it is your first contact with the employer. Make a good first impression in your covering letter/email and the employer is more likely to read your CV.

## The 3 Ws Rule to remember when drafting a cover letter

- What is the post you are applying for?
- Why are you interested in the post?
- What skills have you got that match the job description/person specification?

## How to Structure a Covering Letter

You should structure your covering letter/email like this

- If you know the name of the person then address the email/letter to the named person, otherwise To Whom It May Concern
- Opening paragraph to explain what role you are applying for and where you saw the position advertised
- The next few paragraphs should highlight your skills and experiences that make you suitable for the post
- Final paragraph saying that you will look forward to hearing from the company, or you could say that you are available for discussions regarding the role
- Remember to include in the letter that you have attached/enclosed your CV

# Speculative Letter

This is an email or letter to an employer who hasn't advertised a job, and you are enquiring if the company has opportunities.

Make sure you research the company first before writing. This will help you work out what skills they might be looking for. You can then include these in your speculative letter/email.

Try to address your letter/email to a named person. This is often the Personnel or Human Resources Manager, the Company Manager or the Owner, otherwise To Whom It May Concern.

## Use the 3 Ws Rule:

- State the reason you are writing
- Explain why you are interested in working for that employer
- Tell them what skills and experience you have to offer them. These must be relevant to the type of work you are looking for

You can find examples of [cover and speculative letters](#) on our website.



## Example of Covering Letter

Mr Joe Bloggs  
33 Boulevard Way  
Cardiff  
CF21 2FG  
Mobile - 07111 111111  
joebloggs@gmail.com  
31st January 2025

Personnel Manager  
Welsh Water Meter Reading Services Ltd  
Unit 33 Enterprise Walk  
The Enterprise Estate  
Cardiff  
CF25 7PD

To Whom It May Concern,

REF: Position of Meter Reader (reference 556027)

I am writing to apply for the Meter Reader position at Welsh Water, as advertised on the Indeed website, after being made redundant following 16 years of experience with my previous employer.

My interest in this position stems from Welsh Waters commitment to innovation and sustainability. I am enthusiastic about contributing to your efforts in providing reliable and environmentally friendly energy solutions. My proactive approach and dedication to continuous improvement align well with your company's values.

I am accustomed to working in an environment where teamwork and targets play an important part in the daily routine. As team leader at a local factory, I used my negotiation and organisational skills and successfully improved our team's productivity by 30 percent.

I am highly adaptable, flexible, and a quick learner, eager to undertake training and acquire new skills. For instance, when I started a CNC supervisor role, I learnt how to control new computerised equipment within a week, enabling me to train colleagues effectively.

In addition, I feel I am extremely good at making others feel comfortable, and am always cheerful, courteous and reliable. My strong communication skills ensure effective interactions with colleagues and customers alike.

I believe my combination of skills and experience makes me an ideal candidate for this position and the new challenges it presents. As you can see from my attached CV, I have extensive experience working in industry, outdoors, and in practical roles.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how I can contribute to Welsh Water. I am available for an interview at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

Joe Bloggs

# Further Employability Support

Careers Wales can provide additional support with your journey into employment including help with applications and interview preparation. This support can be offered face to face or via a digital group session.

## Applications

We can help you complete applications and support you with understanding the importance of using the person specification, researching the job/employer and the scoring process.

## Interviews

We can help you to prepare for interviews and provide a mock interview with feedback.

## The CAR Technique

With our support we can help you understand when and how to use the CAR technique when completing applications and preparing for interviews.

## Vacancy Job Bulletin

Visit [careerswales.gov.wales/getting-a-job/job-bulletin](https://careerswales.gov.wales/getting-a-job/job-bulletin) to sign up to our weekly personalised vacancy bulletin.





## How to get in touch

- Visit our Careers Centres
- Contact our Connect Team on 0800 028 4844  
We welcome calls in Welsh and English
- Webchat via [workingwales.gov.wales](https://www.workingwales.gov.wales)
- To book a Careers appointment  
[careerswales.gov.wales/book-an-appointment](https://careerswales.gov.wales/book-an-appointment)



## Our website

Visit our website [careerswales.gov.wales](https://careerswales.gov.wales) for further information.

## Follow us on our social channels

@careerswales @workingwales



# Notes

In preparation for your interview use the space below to gather your information ready for when you meet your Employability Coach or Careers Adviser.

## Personal details

## Personal profile

## Skills



## Education and Qualifications

## Training/Achievements

## Employment and / or Work Experience

## Hobbies and Interests