

Careers 2020

Compiled by UTC South Durham, this booklet contains information about the following:

- How to write a CV
- How to write a cover letter
- How to succeed at an assessment centre interview

Additional resources, including links to careers websites, can be found on [UTC's website](#).



CV Hints and Tips

The main purpose of a CV is to interest an employer sufficiently to invite the writer to an interview. It is a sales document – a chance for someone to sell themselves in writing to an employer. Remember it is a summary, not an autobiography! The following outlines good practice when writing a CV.

A CV Should...

- Be no more than two sides of A4.
- Be easy to follow - most employers will only spend a minute looking over it so you need to convey information clearly!
- Have a sensible layout and a consistent font and font size throughout.
- Not have lots of boxes, pictures, or bright colours - keep it simple!
- Clearly describe your experience and achievements, but make sure that you are concise and that the information is relevant to the job!

Top Tips

- Keep copies of all of the letters, CVs and application forms you send out – you will need them to prepare for interviews.
- A CV is always a work in progress, adapted for each employer and job. Ensure you keep it up to date throughout your career, changing it to suit different jobs.



DANGER

Beware these common errors! Make sure that you:

- Identify what the employer is looking for and only give relevant information.
- Check your presentation, spelling and grammar - proofread, proofread, proofread!
- Avoid putting things on your CV that you cannot talk about or back up at interview.
- Don't undersell and underestimate what you have to offer – make sure you take time to draw out your past achievements and match this to the job you are applying for.

Make sure that you include...



Contact Details

Name, Address. Telephone No, Mobile No, Email address

- Do not use an email address with a nickname.
- If you are uploading your CV to a public/recruitment website it is recommended that you do not include your address or landline, to avoid unnecessary disclosure of your personal data (and identity).



Profile (50-100 words)

- The profile is a “sales pitch” and is a good way of immediately creating a strong and favourable first impression, making an employer want to read on. It is an opportunity to show the employer that you closely match their job requirements.
- You may want to state the type of work you are looking for and then summarise; how you can contribute to the business/add value, that you have the relevant experience and skills for the role, and can “do the job”.
- The profile must be written in the third person, do not use ‘I’. You can find examples on page 6 of this booklet.



Skills/Achievements (Optional)

- A skill is a particular ability to do a work related task e.g. a Sales Assistant has “customer service” skills. Give your skills some context by putting them in a sentence. Don’t just say “Communication Skills”. Give a description. Are they verbal or written? If verbal, are they in the area of selling, operating a telephone help desk, greeting visitors, talking one-to-one or giving presentations to groups for example?
- Some people incorporate their skills into the description of each role they have held within their career history.
- Ideally do not repeat what you have stated in your Profile – rather develop or add to what you have said and use bullet points to help to make this information easy to read.



Career/Employment History/Work Experience

Employer, Job Title, Dates and Duties or Competencies and Achievements

- Give a brief description of your job role to highlight your key skills and experience
- If you don't have much work experience, you might like to highlight your education and training – or any work placements you've completed
- Include voluntary work in this section, as appropriate. Consider putting a job title describing your role, rather than “volunteer” and just mention it as a voluntary role in the job description



Education, Training and Qualification

Put the qualifications or training in order of newest, highest or most relevant to the employer

- You don't always need to list every course and qualification you've completed, although in some cases this might be appropriate (e.g. for recent school leavers).
- Consider what training or qualifications are relevant to the job you are applying for – whether they are from in-house training, professional qualifications, college courses or academic qualifications.
- Remember to include details of courses you are currently studying - if relevant you can include information about specific modules completed.



Membership of Professional or Trade Institutions

List membership of any professional bodies particularly if you have gained membership through study, assessment or accreditation



Additional Information

This optional section gives you the opportunity to *briefly* highlight any particular experience, skill or other piece of information that could strengthen your application, e.g. driving licence, competence in foreign languages, interests and hobbies



References

Do not include details of referees on the CV. The employer will ask if they are required.

- At least one referee should be work-related. Please ensure that you contact any referee you put forward to confirm they are willing to provide a reference and that their contact details are up-to-date.

CV Profile Examples

A highly motivated and a hardworking individual with an eagerness to learn and develop personal skills in a practical setting. Currently studying Mechanical Engineering at University with a drive to gain employment in this field. Excellent communication and presentation skills with experience of managing a project to a specified deadline. A high level of IT ability with strong technical knowledge. Focused and determined to gain knowledge and skills to support career growth as a Mechanical Engineer, always willing to study and train.

A qualified Machine Operator with extensive experience of manufacturing engineering and a certificate in CNC Programming. Now looking for the next role. Competent in the safe operation of production equipment, adhering to quality standards and maximising cost effectiveness, optimal running and equipment efficiency. Pays attention to detail, handling precision pieces of equipment. Solution orientated, hands on and comfortable working at pace and with manufacturing challenges.

An experienced Administrator accustomed to working in fast paced office environments. Excellent organisational skills, with the ability to prioritise own workload, take the initiative and work autonomously, supporting colleagues as needed. Strong IT skills. Functions effectively under pressure, approaching tasks with confidence and clarity. Passionate about completing work to non-negotiable high standards of accuracy. Good interpersonal skills, a professional manner and a flexible attitude.

A talented Web Developer/Designer with extensive experience across a range of projects, spanning the complete development lifecycle from initial assessment through to handover documentation and support. Able to design and develop responsive, standards compliant, secure and reliable web solutions and to deal with continual change, contributing constructively to improvement cycles. Comfortable working collaboratively in a cross-functional team to deliver quality software. An independent problem-solver, with first class written and verbal communication skills.

A customer focussed individual with many years' experience as a successful Financial Adviser, able to communicate easily and effectively with customers, with a genuine enthusiasm for delivering exceptional service. A passion to be the best and driven to identify potential sales opportunities. Able to remain calm under pressure, always polite and friendly with customers and colleagues. A flexible and self-motivated team worker with excellent time management skills, strong numeracy skills and a keen eye for detail.

CV Key Words

Consider using some of the following words in your CV. They are given in alphabetical order:

<i>Accomplished</i>	<i>Directed</i>	<i>Led</i>	<i>Recommended</i>
<i>Achieved</i>	<i>Distributed</i>	<i>Maintained</i>	<i>Reduced</i>
<i>Acquired</i>	<i>Drew up</i>	<i>Managed</i>	<i>Refined</i>
<i>Active</i>	<i>Dynamic</i>	<i>Modified</i>	<i>Repaired</i>
<i>Administered</i>	<i>Economical</i>	<i>Monitored</i>	<i>Represented</i>
<i>Advised</i>	<i>Effective</i>	<i>Motivated</i>	<i>Researched</i>
<i>Analysed</i>	<i>Efficient</i>	<i>Navigated</i>	<i>Resourced</i>
<i>Arranged</i>	<i>Eliminated</i>	<i>Negotiated</i>	<i>Resourceful</i>
<i>Assembled</i>	<i>Engineered</i>	<i>Networked</i>	<i>Responded</i>
<i>Assisted</i>	<i>Established</i>	<i>Obtained</i>	<i>Responsible</i>
<i>Awarded</i>	<i>Evaluated</i>	<i>Operated</i>	<i>Responsive</i>
<i>Built</i>	<i>Exceeded</i>	<i>Organised</i>	<i>Restored</i>
<i>Calculated</i>	<i>Examined</i>	<i>Originated</i>	<i>Restructured</i>
<i>Capable</i>	<i>Excelled</i>	<i>Outperformed</i>	<i>Reviewed</i>
<i>Collected</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Participated</i>	<i>Revised</i>
<i>Commissioned</i>	<i>Expanded</i>	<i>Performed</i>	<i>Revived</i>
<i>Competed</i>	<i>Experienced</i>	<i>Planned</i>	<i>Saved</i>
<i>Competent</i>	<i>Flexible</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Selected</i>
<i>Competitive</i>	<i>Formulated</i>	<i>Prepared</i>	<i>Served</i>
<i>Completed</i>	<i>Founded</i>	<i>Presented</i>	<i>Skilled</i>
<i>Composed</i>	<i>Generated</i>	<i>Proactive</i>	<i>Solved</i>
<i>Conducted</i>	<i>Grew</i>	<i>Problem-solving</i>	<i>Specialised</i>
<i>Consistent</i>	<i>Guided</i>	<i>Processed</i>	<i>Specialist</i>
<i>Consolidated</i>	<i>Headed</i>	<i>Produced</i>	<i>Stabilised</i>
<i>Constructed</i>	<i>Identified</i>	<i>Productive</i>	<i>Streamlined</i>
<i>Consulted</i>	<i>Implemented</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Strengthened</i>
<i>Controlled</i>	<i>Improved</i>	<i>Profitable</i>	<i>Structured</i>
<i>Co-ordinated</i>	<i>Incorporated</i>	<i>Programmed</i>	<i>Successful</i>
<i>Created</i>	<i>Increased</i>	<i>Promoted</i>	<i>Supervised</i>
<i>Creative</i>	<i>Initiated</i>	<i>Proven</i>	<i>Supplied</i>
<i>Decreased</i>	<i>Initiative</i>	<i>Provided</i>	<i>Targeted</i>
<i>Delivered</i>	<i>Installed</i>	<i>Purchased</i>	<i>Taught</i>
<i>Designed</i>	<i>Instructed</i>	<i>Qualified</i>	<i>Tested</i>
<i>Determined</i>	<i>Launched</i>	<i>Quality</i>	<i>Trained</i>
<i>Developed</i>		<i>Quantified</i>	<i>Translated</i>

Name

Address

Telephone Number • Email Address

Personal Profile

(Insert here a paragraph about you)

Key Skills

(Bullet point some of your work place skills that you have developed)

-
-
-

Employment History

(If you have any part time jobs/ volunteering then please detail them here)

Achievements

(Detail here any personal or UTC achievements – you all have industry projects to talk about!)

Education

(List all of your GCSE's here with predicted grades if you know them)

Hobbies & Interests

(Detail here any sporting achievements or hobbies. Anything that is going to make you stand out from other people)

References

(Insert here someone who can give you a reference. It may be your mentor, a teacher or someone who you know outside of school)

The Purpose of a Cover Letter...

- To introduce yourself to an organisation
- To draw attention to what is in your CV or application form
- To show how keen you are to get the job and work for the employer
- To motivate the reader to invite you for an interview
- To set you apart from other applicants

Your name and address here

Aycliffe Fabrications Ltd,
Leaside,
Newton Aycliffe,
DL5 6HX

21/03/2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in application to the Apprentice Sheet Metal Worker / Fabricator position Aycliffe Fabrications Ltd have available. I am a year 13 student at UTC South Durham and I am a creative individual with an affinity for engineering and a strong interest to work within your company.

While studying at the UTC I have taken part in industry projects. Working on the projects showed and enhanced my organisational and team working abilities, I received positive feedback from partners who were working alongside my team. I was successfully able to motivate my team members and find ways to keep them interested in the tasks. Both tasks were carried out in teams and involved finding a solution to a problem by planning, designing, CAD modelling, physical modelling, documenting and finally presenting our projects to senior leaders from different companies around the region. Whilst being a good team member, I also demonstrated my ability to work individually or take charge and lead when required.

I believe my creativity and interest in photography will benefit me in this role through being able to visualise projects, having a keen eye for detail and a desire for perfection in all I set my mind to. Although I enjoy practical work ahead of written work, I am still very capable of applying these skills and have become an accomplished IT user being confident using several computer-based packages.

I would be very interested in gaining an Apprenticeship with your company and if successful, can see myself remaining with you for many years to come. Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Year 13 Student, UTC South Durham

Sign your name here

Top Tips

- Make sure the cover letter is no more than a page of A4 long.
- This is a chance to show off your writing skills - but make sure you proofread!

Assessment Centre Hints & Tips

Performing well during an assessment centre requires good preparation. Following these tips will increase your chances of success on the day...

What is an Assessment Centre?

An assessment centre is a combination of tasks and activities that test your suitability for the job. It gives you the chance to demonstrate a wider range of skills than you would have been able to during a traditional face-to-face interview. Hosted over anything from an afternoon to two days, assessment centres may require an overnight stay, which the employer will normally arrange. You'll usually be joined by six to eight other candidates but it's important to keep focused on your own performance. Assessment centres are often the final stage of the selection process for large graduate recruiters.

Example Assessment Day

Assessment centres vary dramatically in length, style and content, but an example assessment day might be:

09.00 - Arrival and introduction
09.15 - Employer presentation and group ice-breaker exercise
10.00 - Psychometric tests
11.30 - Individual task: In-tray exercise
12.45 - Lunch
13.45 - Group exercise: Case study
14.45 - Assessment interviews
16.15 - Individual presentations
17.15 - Evaluation
17.30 - Finish

Who are the Assessors?

The assessors are usually a mix of HR consultants and line managers who will score your actions against competency frameworks. They discuss all aspects of your performance before reaching a final decision on whether or not to hire you. All, several, one or none of the candidates could be successful.

What Happens at an Assessment Centre?

Assessment days can be held anywhere from the employers offices to a hotel or training facility. You will work both individually and as part of a group on a variety of exercises including:

- case studies
- group discussions
- in-tray exercises
- presentations
- psychometric tests
- role play
- social events
- written tests.

[Find out more at interview tests and exercises.](#)

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How Will I be Assessed?

Employers don't just assess you against job competencies; they also aim to ensure that you're the right fit. Being scrutinised for such a long time can be challenging, but assessment centres allow you to compensate for poor performance in one task by excelling in another. Key skills that employers look for include:

- adaptability • analytical thinking • commercial awareness • communication • creativity • decision-making
- leadership • negotiation • organisation • persuasion • planning • teamwork • time management

Top Tips

- Be assertive during all exercises and involve others in group discussions
- Ensure that you understand the requirements of each task by quickly digesting the brief
- Maintain a friendly and polite manner with everyone you meet, and remember that you're always being assessed.
- Keep your phone in your bag - avoid looking at during breaks. Instead, engage other candidates in conversation.

Find out more at Prospects.

For free practice tests **visit psychometric tests on Prospects** or read their advice on **preparing for and answering some of the most common interview questions.**

How do I Prepare?

As with interviews, good preparation is vital. Before the assessment day, it's important that you:

- Give yourself time to complete and practise any material that you've been asked to prepare.
- Identify which skills, interests and experiences the employer is looking for by revisiting the job description and any other material that the company has sent you.
- Practise potential exercises and common interview questions with a friend or family member.
- Read the organisation's website, social media profiles and key literature (e.g. business plan, financial reports and corporate social responsibility strategy), ensuring that you're prepared to share your views and ideas.
- Reflect on your first interview, asking the company for feedback, reviewing your performance, and noting any questions or situations that caused you difficulty.
- Research the news, trends, competitors, history and opportunities of the organisation and its job sector.
- Choose your outfit the night before (always make sure you are in business), get plenty of sleep, and make sure that you have a good breakfast. Plan your journey, aiming to arrive at least ten minutes early.