



# 3 Kitchens

Volunteer • Seek Employment • Become an Entrepreneur

Employability Programme - Skills to Find Work

## M3.2 CV Writing

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# CV Writing Module

- 01 What is a CV and Why I Need One
- 02 Tips on a Great CV
- 03 References and Referees



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# 01 What is a CV and why do I need one?

## What is a CV?

**A CV (Curriculum Vitae)** sometimes called Resume, gives details of your personal information, qualifications, skills, experience and employment history. It is one of the most important tools you can use in your job search as it tells a potential employer all they need to know about you.

## Why do I need a CV?

A well written and presented CV is a good way to show employers that you've got the skills and experience they need and that you are right for the job. Getting an interview will often depend on how good your CV is.

There are lots of different ways of presenting a CV but there are some basic things that they should all contain.



# Tips on a Great CV

# Tips on a good CV

1. Get the basics right
2. Presentation is key
3. Stick to no more than two pages of A4
4. Understand the job description
5. Tailor the CV to the role
6. Making the most of skills
7. Making the most of interests
8. Making the most of experience
9. Including references
10. Keep your CV updated
11. Personal profile / personal statement
12. Education and qualifications

01

## Get the basics right

There is no right or wrong way to write a CV but there are some common sections you should cover.

These include: personal and contact information; education and qualifications; work history and/or experience; relevant skills to the job in question; own interests, achievements or hobbies; and some references.

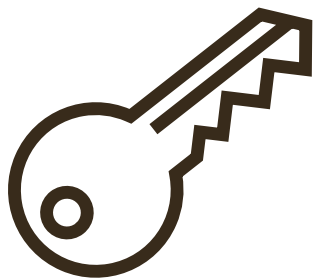


# 02

## Presentation is key

A successful cv is always carefully and clearly presented, and printed on clean, crisp white paper. The layout should always be clean and well-structured and cv's should never be crumpled or folded, so use an A4 envelope to post your applications.

Always remember the CV hotspot, the upper middle area of the first page is where the recruiter's eye will naturally fall, so make sure you include your most important information there.





# 03

## Stick to no more than two pages of A4

A good CV is clear, concise and makes every point necessary without waffling. You don't need pages and pages of paper, just keep things short and sweet.

A CV is a reassurance to a potential employer; it's a chance to tick the right boxes and if everything is satisfactory there's a better chance of a job interview.



Employers receive dozens of CVs all the time so it's unlikely they'll read each one cover to cover. Most will make a judgement about a CV within seconds, so stick to a maximum of two pages of A4 paper.

# 04

## Understand the job description

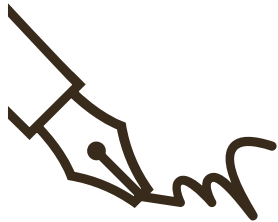
The clues are in the job application, so read the details from start to finish. Take notes and create bullet points, highlighting everything you can satisfy and all the bits you can't. With the areas where you're lacking, fill in the blanks by adapting the skills you do have.

For example, if the job in question requires someone with sales experience, you should share any retail work you've undertaken – even if it was part time. It will demonstrate the skills you do have and show how they're transferable.

## Tailor the CV to the role

When you've established what the job entails and how you can match each requirement, create a CV specifically for that role. Remember, there is no such thing as a generic CV. Every CV you send to a potential employer should be tailored to that role so don't be lazy and hope that a general CV will work because it won't.

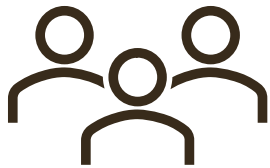
Create a unique CV for every job you apply for. You don't have to re-write the whole thing, just adapt the details so they're relevant.



## Making the most of skills

Under the skills section of your CV don't forget to mention key skills that can help you to stand out from the crowd. These could include: communication skills; digital skills; team working; problem solving and of course speaking a foreign language.

Skills can come out of the most unlikely places, so really think about what you've done to grow your own skills, even if you take examples from being in a local voluntary group – it's all relevant.



## Making the most of interests

- Under this section, highlight the things that show off skills you've gained, and employers look for. Describe any examples of positions of responsibility, working in a team or anything that shows you can use your own initiative.
- Include anything that shows how diverse, interested and skilled you are. Don't include passive interests like watching TV or solitary hobbies that can be perceived as lacking in people skills. Make yourself sound really interesting. If you belong to any clubs or organisations, mention them here



## Making the most of experience

- Employers spend more time looking at this section than any other part of a CV, so make the most of all the work experience you've had.
- Mention all the work you've done, including part-time, work experience and voluntary work. Don't forget to include any school or college work experience placements. Really get to grips with the valuable skills and experience you have gained from past work positions, every little helps.

## Making the most of experience

- Use assertive and positive language under the work history and experience sections, such as "developed", "organised" or "achieved". Try to relate the skills you have learned to the job role you're applying for. For example: *"The work experience involved working in a team,"* or *"This position involved planning, organisation and leadership as I was responsible for a team of people"*.
- List your most recent job or placement first. Include the name of the employer, your job title and the start and end dates.
- Write a brief description of your duties in the job or placement and be positive about your achievements and skills gained.

## Including References

References should be from someone who has employed you in the past and can vouch for your skills and experience. If you've never worked before, you're OK to use a teacher or tutor as a referee. Your second referee could be from a family friend or neighbour (but not a relative), staff from a job or work experience placement, people you do voluntary work with or youth club leaders.



References tell an employer about your ability and your character, for example whether you are reliable and if you work well with others.



## Including References

Include the addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses (if they have these) for both referees, along with their job title or relationship to you.

For example, a teacher, work experience placement supervisor or a neighbour.

Check beforehand with anyone you want to list as a referee, to make sure that they are willing to give a reference if they are asked.



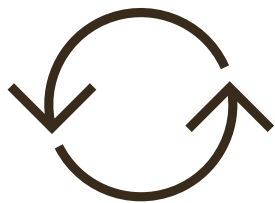
# 10

## Keep your CV updated

It's crucial to review your CV on a regular basis and add any new skills or experience that's missing. For example, if you've just done some volunteering or worked on a new project, make sure they're on there – potential employers are always impressed with candidates who go the extra mile to boost their own skills and experience.

### Personal details

Put your name in bold or a larger font at the top of the CV. Follow with your contact details; your address, telephone numbers and email, if you have one. You can also add your date of birth here, although it's not essential



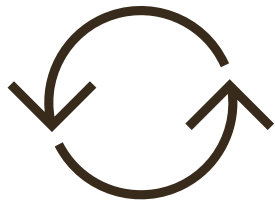
# 10

## Keep your CV updated

### **Personal profile / personal statement**

Most modern CVs contain a personal profile, which is a summary of your skills and achievements, what you are doing at the moment and your future career goals.

This is your chance to really ‘sell’ yourself to an employer and tell them how your skills, experience and interests can benefit them.



If you have a copy of your CV saved, you can change your personal profile to suit the job you are applying for.

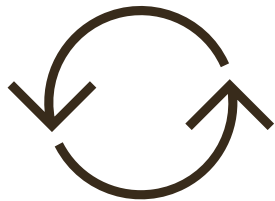
10

## Keep your CV updated

### Education and qualifications

Start with your most recent qualifications. You should state the subjects that you have studied even if you did not take or pass any exams, especially if the subject is relevant to the job you're applying for.

If you obtained distinctions or prizes for certain subjects mention this too.

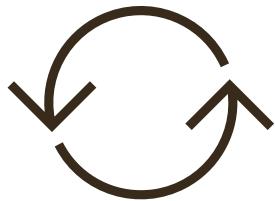


Make sure all the information is correct and accurate without any spelling mistakes

10

## Use these tools to help

- <https://barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-help-applying-for-jobs/school/cv-builder/>
- <https://novoresume.co.uk/>
- <https://www.livecareer.com/>
- <https://bestonlineresume.com/>



# 03 References and Referees

# References and Referees

An employer does not usually have to give a work reference but if they do, it must be fair and accurate. You may be able to challenge a reference you think is unfair or misleading.

## Types of references and referees

Here is an overview of the most common types of references and referees that may help you in your career:



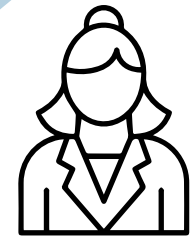
01

Professional references and referees



02

Academic references and referees



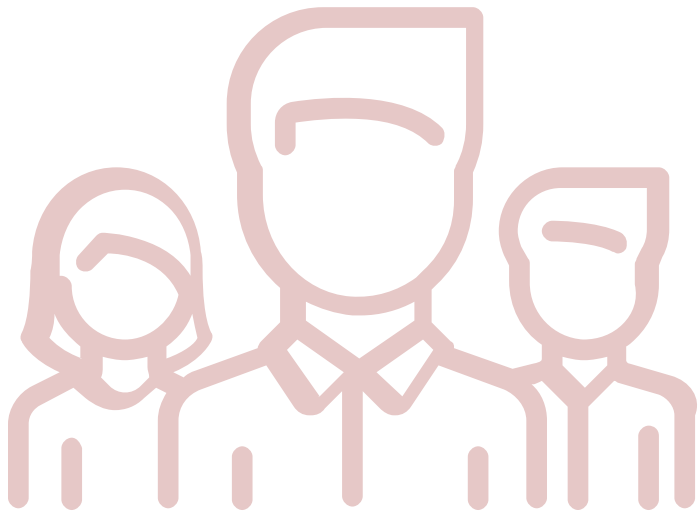
03

Personal or character reference and referees

01

## Professional references and referees

A professional reference confirms your claims about your professional achievements, education, experience, habits, skills and character to your prospective employer. They could have worked with you in a professional setting as a previous manager, mentor, business contact or colleague.

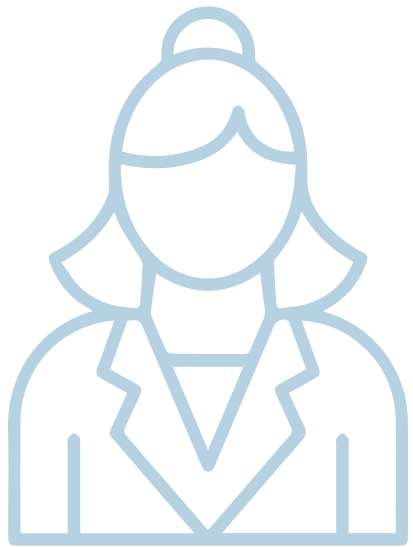






## Academic references and referees

An academic reference confirms your claims about your education and experience to your prospective employer. If educational credentials help you to increase your chances of getting a job, it's useful to provide academic references. Secondary school teachers, university lecturers, staff advisers and people who can confirm your academic achievements are the best kind of academic referees.



## Personal or character reference and referees

Personal references are used when you don't have work experience, or it has been a while since your last employment. Your friend, community leader, neighbour or a community or religious leader can act as character referees. Choose people who know you well to talk about your good qualities. It helps if your character referee is a respectable member of society, their reputation may serve as a boost to your CV.

# How to identify the right type of referees

Getting recommendations from referees that suit your job position gives you an edge over other candidates. Here we discuss how to identify the right references to include in your CV.



01

Make a list of possible references



02

Consider which references are most relevant



03

Consider who can give the best answers



04

Think about your relationship with a potential referee



01

## Make a list of possible references

Make a list of individuals you know can serve as potential referees. This list may contain people who are willing to give positive recommendations to your employer. These referees may be individuals with good careers in their chosen profession. The quality of referees provided in your references may determine the outcome of your job application.



02

## Consider which references are most relevant:

When you're deciding on which referees to pick, think about selecting people who may highlight your strengths to prospective employers. To help boost your chances of getting the job, you need referees who:

- know you
- are aware with your work experience, work ethic, education, qualifications and skills
- are willing to vouch for your credentials



## Consider who can give the best answers

Think about who may be best placed to answer the types of questions that a prospective employer may ask, such as:

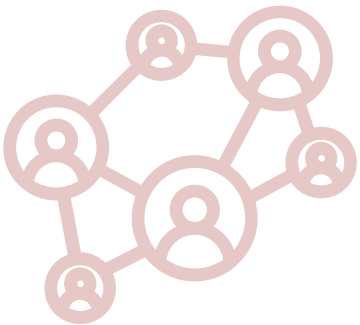
- How do you know this person?
- What can you tell me about their skills, abilities, work ethics, punctuality, personal character and conduct with other people?
- Can I work with this person?
- What makes them the ideal candidate for this position and our organisation?



## Think about your relationship with a potential referee

Consider the following aspects of your relationship with possible referees:

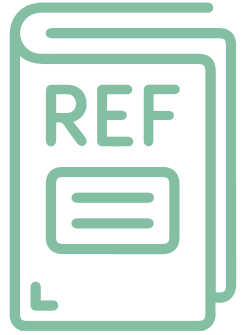
- How long ago did you work with them?
- How good was your work relationship with them?
- How are they going to explain your attributes to your prospective employer?



# Why are references important?

References can have a significant impact on whether a potential employer decides to hire you. The primary reasons that references are important are outlined below:

- **To confirm the credibility of work history:** References give your CV more credibility because they demonstrate that you're confident enough of your work history and track record to have people who may vouch for you and your suitability.
- **To confirm the presence of a good relationship between you and your past employers:** References also give the impression that you don't have anything to hide (such as a poor track record or nobody willing to recommend you).





# How to provide your references

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Here are the steps you may want to take to provide a list of references for a potential employer:



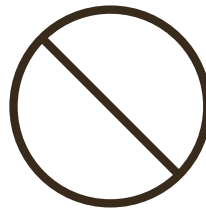
**01**

Write your references with clarity



**02**

Write it in order of importance



**03**

Know it's not compulsory to provide references in your CV

INTERESTS

CV

CURRICULUM  
VITAE

QUALIFICATION

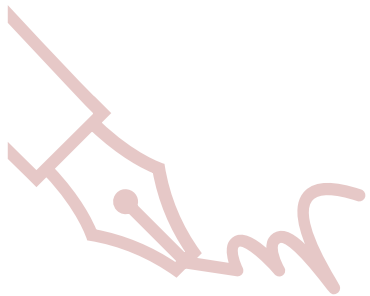
RESUME

EDUCATION

01

## Write your references with clarity

Write your list of referees on a separate page or at the bottom of your CV. Separate each referee's contact details with a line space for clarity. Be sure to include your referee's official title next to their name. Describe the relationship with your referee, for example, 'Former manager'.



02

## Write it in order of importance

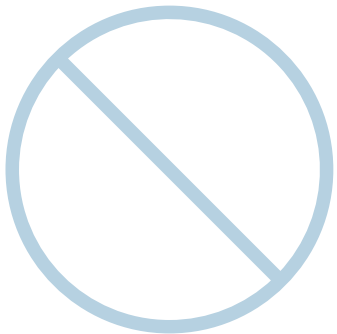
List your references in descending order, starting with the person who you think may give you the most positive recommendation. Aim to include a minimum of two referees. If you're applying for a top-level position, have about five to six references available to support your application.



03

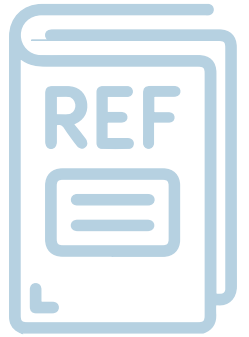
## Know it's not compulsory to provide references in your CV

There is no obligation to include references on your CV. You can wait for a potential employer to ask you directly for references. If you're not sure who to use as a reference, you can write 'References available on request' at the bottom of your CV.



# When to provide references

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You may be asked to present your references upfront when you apply for a job or during the application process. Alternatively, the employer may request your cover letter, CV and references as part of the application process. Often prospective employers prefer to contact your referees themselves to be sure to get an objective response.

You want to always have your references already prepared and ready to present upon request. Bring a copy of your referees' contact details to give to companies during your interview if requested.

# Top tips on references

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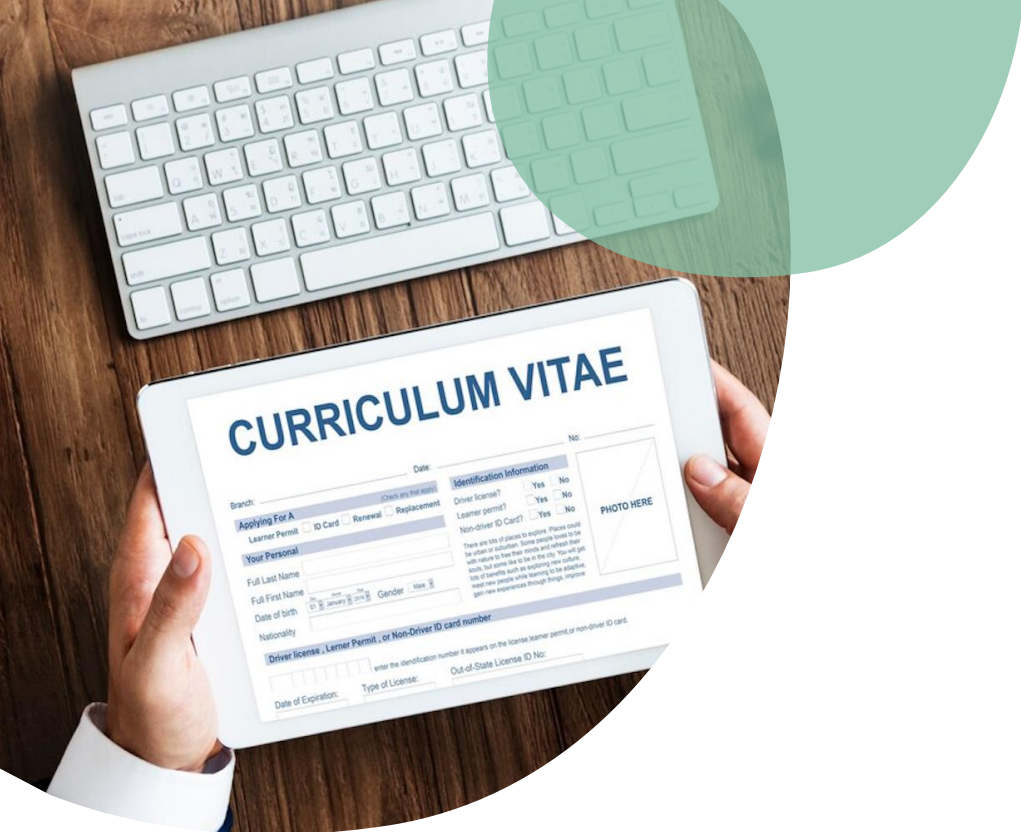
Follow these simple steps when asking for a reference:

- **Ask for permission:** Seek permission from your referees before you pen down their names on your list of references. This allows them to think of your best skills and achievements before your prospective employer contacts them.
- **Inform references of the job position you're applying for:** You can give your potential referees your CV and the job description so they can prepare before being contacted. Informing them ahead helps them identify the skills and qualities that set you apart from other candidates.
- **Remind your academic references:** If you know your academic credentials are your point of strength, remind your lecturers and professors about the courses and projects you were taught, your grades you and the skills you gained.

# Top tips on references

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- **Give your referees the freedom of choice:** Giving your desired referees the option to bow out from providing a reference can save you from a potentially embarrassing situation. Don't force your referees to give recommendations to avoid them giving a bad one which may turn out counterproductive.
- **Protect the privacy of your referees:** Don't give out private addresses, numbers or emails of your referees. Instead, use a work address, email and phone number where applicable.
- **Show gratitude:** It's important you appreciate your referees for agreeing to communicate your positive qualities to your employers. It's essential you make them realise you appreciate their positive endorsement and you're willing to reciprocate the gesture in the future.
- **Inform them of the job status:** It's important you keep them up-to-date about the status of your job application.



## What to do when you don't have a referee

If you can't find someone to vouch for you, provide a reasonable explanation for this. Some organisations don't perform reference checks as they can use the internet and social media to research job applicants.

Since many organisations research you online, make sure that you provide useful information on your online profiles e.g. LINKEDIN is very powerful in this regard.







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Well done, you have  
completed

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