



UNIVERSITY OF
LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

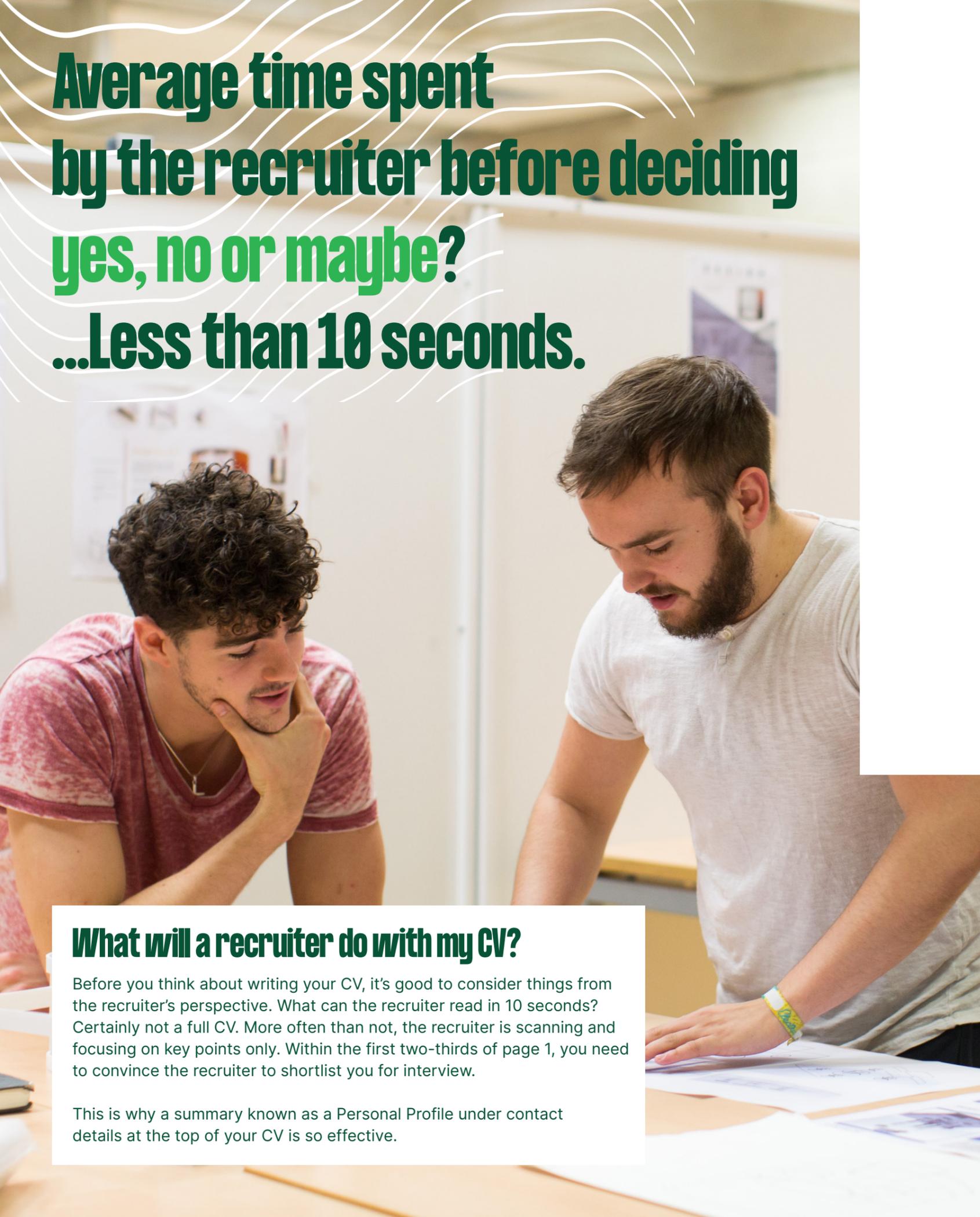
Cooperative
Education and
Careers Division



UL CV-Guide

Top Tips / Where to begin / What to include / What to avoid

Average time spent by the recruiter before deciding yes, no or maybe? ...Less than 10 seconds.



What will a recruiter do with my CV?

Before you think about writing your CV, it's good to consider things from the recruiter's perspective. What can the recruiter read in 10 seconds? Certainly not a full CV. More often than not, the recruiter is scanning and focusing on key points only. Within the first two-thirds of page 1, you need to convince the recruiter to shortlist you for interview.

This is why a summary known as a Personal Profile under contact details at the top of your CV is so effective.

What are Employers looking for?

Research results compiled by the University of Limerick Cooperative Education and Careers Division (CECD) represent an annual snapshot of graduate recruitment across Ireland. Participants of the Graduate Market Survey 2019 are graduate employers who have engaged with the University of Limerick Careers Service in 2019. These include local, national and global companies, multinational and SMEs, from all sectors and disciplines. 229 graduate employers participated in this year's survey, the fifth year of the survey.

Respondent employers were asked to rank 12 global technical skills, according to the value of those skills to their organisation. Economic and technological changes are facilitating an internationalisation of business. Many companies, large and small, have international customers/operations and international recruitment patterns. The jobs market for highly-skilled graduates is becoming increasingly global.



Top five global technical skills 2019:

1. Flexibility
2. Self-motivation
3. Analytical thinking
4. Qualifications related to job
5. Collaborative

Respondent employers were asked to rank 12 global soft skills, according to the value of those skills to their organisation. Organisations are challenging the national expectations of the graduate workforce. As the requirements of employers continue to change, graduates and providers of higher education must adapt to succeed.



Top five global soft skills 2019:

1. Open to new ideas/ways of thinking
2. Seeks opportunities for continuous learning
3. Demonstrates respect for others
4. Listens/observes to deepen understanding
5. Works effectively in diverse teams

CV Layout Page One

1. Personal Details

This section of your CV is essential but not selling, so give it the appropriate amount of space in your CV.

In this section you need to include your name, address, email address, contact phone number and your LinkedIn profile. If there's nothing special about your LinkedIn profile, leave it out.

Make sure that your email address is appropriate: no nicknames!
Check that your voicemail message sounds well and is working properly.

There is no need to include your date of birth, marital or health status in this section.

2. Personal Profile

Start with the job advertisement. What is the employer looking for (circle key words)? Why are you a good match for these specific things?

Jot down your ideas and use them as a basis for your personal profile.

You need to know your **Unique Selling Points** for the job market in general: you will be asked about them time and time again.

When interviewers say 'Tell me about yourself' or 'Why you?' they are asking about your USPs. Figure out your USPs:

— Do you have a degree/postgrad in [subject]? Do you have strong academic results?

— Where or what did you do for your Co-op? What skills did you gain through work experience and study?

— Are you a class rep? Are you involved in sports where you show leadership/teamwork?

It's smart to include a personal profile.

The recruiter scans your CV in full but he/she can miss things. Write a personal profile to summarise key points for the recruiter.

Your CV will be off to a great start!

— Are you bilingual? – Have you well developed language skills and at what level?

— What are your career goals? How can you contribute to the employer's goals?

CV Layout Page One

3. Education

State (1) qualification and (2) start/finish dates of your course.

Give one line to this information: keep the qualification on one side, keep the dates on the opposite side.

— Start a new line: name your university.

— State your results (or predicted grades) if they are strong.

— In doing your FYP or dissertation, did you gain any skills that are relevant to this job? Describe this in 2–3 lines.

— Think about your other major projects: did you learn anything that might be valid for this job?

— List any modules you have completed that would be valid for this job.

— List any scholarships or other awards you have earned.

— If you have gone on Erasmus give details of university, dates and subjects studied.

— Second-level education, only the qualification appears in bold, e.g. Honours Leaving Certificate.

— If you are graduating with an Engineering degree, you may have done HL Maths and HL Engineering for the Leaving Certificate, highlight this e.g. Five honours including a H2 in Engineering and a H4 in Maths

List the highlights of your education in reverse-chronological order (most recent event first).

Your qualification is the only element that should appear in bold in the Education section: it is key information and it needs to stand out.

Think about the employer's needs and list only the modules or areas of study that matter in this job.

Have you undertaken any short courses? Give a brief description if it is relevant. Short course examples: language or technology.



CV Layout Page One/Two

4. Work Experience

What skills/competencies are stated in the job advert? Ask yourself:

When did I display these in my past jobs, Co-op, course or extra-curricular activities?

- Flexibility, e.g. volunteering to work late/long shifts
- Motivation to succeed, e.g. high-activity or challenging work environment
- Strong interpersonal skills, e.g. dealing with different colleagues/departments while on Co-op
- Innovation, e.g. thinking of new ideas to save time and expense
- Accuracy, e.g. cash or data management duties
- Reverse-chronological order is not compulsory but many employers prefer it.
- Some people present Work Experience in two sections: Relevant Work Experience and Additional Work Experience. Less relevant experience or part-time work can appear on page 2 of your CV. You must place your most relevant role on page 1.
- Figure out which work experience matters most to the employer. Give detail on your most relevant job. Give the bare facts on less relevant work.

99% of the time, Co-op will be the most important work experience.

Job title is in bold. Company name is not in bold

Set the scene for the employer. Give some context.

Be concise. Focus on goals/tasks you successfully achieved/completed.

Can you supply metrics? specific numbers, figures, amounts etc.

Use action orientated verbs e.g. analysed, evaluated, formulated, established, created and designed.

Even part-time work that seems straightforward can be used to show positives. Think in a broad sense about how you've done well, e.g. thriving in a high-activity environment.



CV Layout Page Two

5. Interests

- Organise your information neatly.
- List your interests and focus on those that show your passion, commitment and work ethic.
- Write about any volunteering work you have done.
- Write about any clubs/societies you are in.
- Write about any sporting activities in which you are involved.
- Strive for balance. Focus on a few positive interests and give detail on them.
- Stay current and extend information.

MEMBERSHIPS

- Are you a member of any organisations?

6. References

- 'References available on request' is the market norm.
- You do not need to provide details of your referees straight away, but take this opportunity to think about them.
- Two references that are recent and work-related.
- If your only employment to date has been within the family business, then it is okay to include a reference from there but the employer is likely to presume a bias.
- You can include your current employer. Only do this if it feels right to you and if the employer is happy about it!

Focus on your active interests: the ones that get you learning, moving and doing!

Recruiters can easily scan your interests if you sub-divide them.

Give detail on the dates, organisation, tasks and your involvement, this can show that you are interested in your wellbeing and that you are a good team person.

Don't just name your club: give detail on dates, organisation, tasks and your role. Focus on clubs/societies that demonstrate your curiosity and commitment.

If you claim that you run marathons, study classical music and achieve sporting greatness every week, an employer might wonder what time you would have left for a demanding job.

Employers will usually ask for two work related references, if you only have one work related reference available, you can include an academic reference.

You can include references from countries outside of Ireland

Provide an email address in these cases and confirm that the reference will be English-language.

Edward Example

123 Main Street
Limerick

T: 087 1234567
E: edwardexample@yahoo.ie
L: www.linkedin/edexample.com

- 2.1 honours International Management and Global Business student with experience working as a sales and marketing intern in a start-up technology services company – Smurfit Ltd.
- Excellent market research skills and CRM knowledge gained while completing an internship with Media Street.
- Fluent Spanish written and spoken

Education

2019 – 2020 Masters in International Management and Global Business

University of Limerick – 2.1 Honours Grade Expected

Modules include: International and Cross Cultural Management, International Corporate Finance, Research Methods, Global Business Strategy, International Marketing, Project Management.

Thesis: An analysis of market entry strategies used by Irish SME's

2015 – 2019 Bachelor of Business Studies

University of Limerick – 2.1 Honours Grade Achieved

Major: Marketing, **Minor:** Information Technology

Modules included: Marketing Communications, Market Research, Consumer Behaviour, Sales Management, Database systems

Project: Conducted research survey with local companies analysing the "Effectiveness of their Customer Relationship Management System"

Relevant Work Experience

Jan – Sept 2017 Sales and Marketing Intern Smurfit Ltd. Limerick

- Conducted in-depth market research on target markets and potential customers
- Managed companies CRM system, ensured client information was up to date and accurate. Developed CRM user manual, generated reports as required by the business
- Assisted in the design and development of various marketing material such as booklets, brochures, presentations and website content
- Actively involved in the planning and execution of the annual sales and marketing plan
- Worked closely with business development managers to build a database of potential customers in target markets

June - Aug 2016 Market Research Intern Media Street Dublin

- Researched target markets
- Maintained database of key clients
- Developed advertising and promotion plan
- Co-ordinated sales activities

Other Work Experience

June - Aug 2018 Crew Member McDonald's Restaurant Limerick

- Received 'Employee of the Month' award for customer service and excellence
- Arranged and supervised parties of up to 30 children ensuring that food and entertainment were provided
- Supervised a team of 15 staff on the late shift during the absence of the Team Leader
- Trained in customer service and food preparation in accordance with McDonald's quality standards

IT Skills

- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint

Interests and Achievements

- Awarded Annual Gold Medal for International Marketing assignment in 2018
- Voted Class representative for 2018 & 2019. Exhibited adaptability, ability to make decisions and strong persuasiveness skills through this process.
- Captain of UL soccer team; led team to winning the final of the Intervarsity Cup for the first time since 1989.
- Full driving licence

References available on request

CV Checklist

1. Heading & Contact Details

- Name at top of CV (rather than “curriculum vitae”)
- Contact details included (phone number, professional email – possibly address & LinkedIn URL)

Yes No N/A

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Personal Profile

- Recruiters spend less than 10 seconds on average reading a CV – your personal profile is the first thing they’ll read. Is it concise (4-5 sentences), targeted to the role and evidence based (linking skills to past experience)

Yes No N/A

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

3. Education

- Reverse chronological order (most recent first)
- Name of University/School and course title clearly specified (including current course studying)
- Dates of attendance clearly specified
- Achieved/expected grade classification included (might want to include if good)
- Relevant modules included (don’t use tables in your CV - include in bullet points)
- Short description of dissertation/academic projects if relevant
- Awards/scholarships listed if relevant

Yes No N/A

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Work Experience

- Reverse chronological order (most recent first) or most relevant e.g. Coop
- Name of company – is it clear what industry/sector this is in?
- Job title included
- Dates of employment clearly specified
- Brief description of role included (use bullet points rather than paragraphs)
- Key skills demonstrated and any key results/achievements quantified

Yes No N/A

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CV Checklist

5. Other Skills & Interests

- Include Volunteering/Class rep/Sports/Other interests here
- IT Skills (e.g. Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Bloomberg Terminal, VBA, Python, C++)
- Does everything you have included in this section make your CV stronger
- Avoid listing past-times that practically everyone enjoys like reading, socialising, cinema

Yes No N/A

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. References

- “References available upon request” included as standard sign off, unless requested to include references

Yes No N/A

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

7. Final Check

- Have you spell checked and proof read multiple times to avoid typos
- Is the formatting consistent and neat with clear section headings
- Do you use the same font throughout – and a font size of 10 – 12
- Have you avoided the use of tables and images (esp. for opportunities that may use ATS software)
- Is it an appropriate length - maximum 2 pages
- Are the margins appropriate (min 1cm on all edges)
- Have you used past tense used for past experiences
- Do you avoid use of personal pronoun – instead of saying “I achieved” just start with “Achieved” –it’s punchier

Yes No N/A

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Big Picture

- Are you presenting yourself the way you want to? E.g. Motivated, driven, commercially aware, good fit for the role?
- Do you avoid gaps in your CV? <https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/how-to-explain-a-gap-in-your-cv/>
- Does the CV demonstrate you understand the role and have put in effort to tailor the CV?
- Have you made a list of the skills the employer is looking for and tried to demonstrate you have as many as possible?

Yes No N/A

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Top Ten Tips

1 Length

Your CV should be a two-page document: this is the market norm.

2 Font

Stick to one simple sans serif font (e.g. Arial, Calibri) in point size 10–12. Simple fonts make your CV look clean, neat and readable.

3 Paragraphs/bullet points

There are no strict rules here but it is good to break a CV into smaller sections. If a CV has too many paragraphs of text, it can be hard to read. Good CVs use a combination of paragraphs and bullet points. Experiment and go with what looks clearest on the page.

4 Bold

Bold is used to make things stand out. But if you put too many words in bold, then none of them actually stand out. The sample CV shows you where bold can be used for real effect.

5 Design

Don't use boxes, shading, pictures or icons. Keep it simple: the recruiter will thank you.

6 Save the job advertisement

Keep a copy of the job advertisement. If it appears on a website, save a copy of it onto your computer before the notice is taken down.

7 File

You will have different drafts of your CV for different jobs. Create a simple filing system on your computer so that you can find your files with ease. Save your final draft as a PDF (it looks better than a Word doc). And use your own name as the file name (e.g. Joe Bloggs_CV). This makes it easier for the recruiter to file and find your CV.

8 Disclosure

You don't need to overshare information: don't include your date of birth or any photos of yourself. When it comes to disclosure of a disability, you can contact the Careers Service for advice before you send your CV.

9 Reread the job advertisement

On the final draft of your CV, do some 'zoom-out' checks. Reread the job advertisement side-by-side with your CV. Check that you've covered all of the key job requirements on page 1 of your CV.

10 Fresh eyes

Call on two different people that you can rely on. Ask them to proofread your CV and mark any mistakes in grammar, spelling, spacing, etc. Ask them to be critical. It will be upsetting if they spot loads of errors. But it's much better if errors come to light now, while you still have time to fix them. You want the recruiter to see a smart, flawless CV. It doesn't matter if it takes you ten drafts to get there!