



# CV & COVER LETTER GUIDE

**NOT SURE HOW TO WRITE A CV?**

**USE THIS GUIDE TO HELP YOU.**

## WHY WRITE A CV?

1. Some employers will ask for a CV, some will ask for an application form and some will ask for both. Make sure you know exactly what the employer wants before you apply.
2. A CV is a perfect way for you to showcase yourself and demonstrate to employers why you deserve an interview for their vacancy.

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO BEFORE YOU BEGIN?

Before writing your CV, you must consider the reader and really ensure that you understand what skills and qualities the employer wants for the role. You can find this information in the job advertisement or job description. You must also remember that you will need to adapt your CV each time you apply for a new vacancy.

## SOME IMPORTANT THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Every CV is unique and you have the freedom to present it in whichever way you like but we do ask you to consider the following suggestions:

1. Font – Use a standard font e.g. Arial, which is easy to read and professional. It should be 11 or 11.5 – no bigger, no smaller. Subheadings should be in bold or underlined – not both.
2. Structure – Use a logical structure (please see the example below). Tables without borders can be useful for formatting neatly in columns but tables and line bars are usually off-putting.

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO INCLUDE?

1. Personal Profile
2. Education and Training
3. Employment History
4. Key Skills and Key Achievements
5. Hobbies and Interests
6. References

Sections 2-6 can be in any order but this is the order we recommend.

### 1. PERSONAL PROFILE

This section includes your personal details; full name, address including postcode, telephone number and email address. This section is also an opportunity to sell yourself at the very beginning of your CV with a concise personal statement, a good example would be:

A final year A Level student from John Leggott College with practical experience in the hospitality and sales\* industry, now seeking a challenging role in events and administration.

Or to be more subject specific...

A final year, gifted and talented A Level Chemistry student from John Leggott College with practical work experience in a range of medical sectors\*, now seeking a challenging role as a pharmaceutical apprentice.

**\* REMEMBER - YOU MUST TAILOR YOUR CV FOR EACH JOB WHICH YOU APPLY FOR!**

## 2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Include any school qualifications gained, e.g. GCSE's, pending A-Level or BTEC results, further qualifications such as First Aid or any enrichments which you have completed.

Write these in most recent order.

Name of Establishment	Qualification	Grade	Date
John Leggott College	A Levels in....	Pending	2012-2014
	First Aid Enrichment	Qualified	2013
St Bedes			2007-2012
	GCSE Maths	6	
	GCSE English	7	
Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.

DO NOT MISS OUT OR LIE ABOUT ANY QUALIFICATIONS THAT YOU HAVE, YOU MIGHT BE ASKED TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE UPON OFFER OF THE POSITION.

## 3. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Have three headings and provide brief information about the duties of the role. You can use a table without borders to help you with your presentation of this information:

Job Title	Name of company	Dates of employment
Waitress	The Old Parlor Pub	September 2013-Present
Promoted to Restaurant Supervisor within 6 months of this role. Responsible for driving sales incentives during shifts and being responsible for employees. Motivating the team to provide outstanding customer service for repeated custom.		
Sales Assistant	Vue Cinema Scunthorpe	May 2013-September 2013*
Providing excellent customer service through effective communication to enhance the experience of Vue Cinemas. Training new members of staff to develop competency in the use of the I.T till systems and the food counters. Completing cleaning duties to a high standard as part of a team.		

\* If you are not sure about dates, call the employer you worked for or try to be as accurate as possible.

### WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A PAID JOB ROLE?

That's okay, think about work experience, fundraising events at college, voluntary work, memberships or societies...?

If you still do not have any of these, speak with the work experience advisors at JLC to get a placement and develop those employability skills which employers want ASAP!

## 4. KEY SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

You only need to bullet point 5-8 skills, remember your CV should not exceed 2 sides of A4.

Remember to cover the skills required as mentioned on the job description:

- The ability to problem solve to a high standard leading to A grades in Mathematics A Level.
- Effective time management through organising a demanding college workload including three subjects and two enrichment courses.
- Excellent commitment and reliability through 100% attendance at college.
- 'Outstanding Contribution to the Workplace' Award – Won in June 2014 for completing 4 successful work placements in customer focused environments.

## 5. HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

Think carefully about what your hobbies and interests might project to an employer:

E.g. Socialising on Facebook? – NO! OR... Partying with friends at the weekend? – BIG NO!

Even if these are true, try to include hobbies which extend your skills:

E.g. I enjoy reading novels or academic papers in Psychology.

## 6. REFERENCES

It is perfectly acceptable to write:

*Referee's can be provided upon request.*

Employers do not need to know these details at the CV short listing stage and these are your former employer's personal details – therefore they need to be kept confidential.

You must ask your chosen referee if they are happy to provide a reference for you and this ideally needs to be from your most recent employer.

## CV EXEMPLAR

John Carnes

17 Steeple Hill Road, Cottingham, Hull, HU9 4EG  
Email: john.carnes@googlemail.co.uk  
Tel: 01482 300300 Mobile: 071 23456789

A final year, gifted and talented A Level Chemistry student from John Leggott College with practical work experience in a range of medical environments, now seeking a challenging role as a pharmacy apprentice.

### Education

Name of Establishment	Dates	Qualifications	Grade
John Leggott College	2012 – 2014	Maths	A
		Chemistry	A*
		Biology	A
		Physics	B
		First Aid Enrichment	Qualified
Frederick Gough School	2007 – 2012	GCSE	
		Maths	A
		English	A
		Science	A*
		Geography	B
		P.E	B
		German	B
		Business Studies	B
		Art	C
BTEC in ICT	Merit		

### Employment and Work Experience

Job Title	Name of Company	Dates of Employment
Bar Tender	The Old Parlour Pub	September 2013 - Present

Promoted to Bar Supervisor within 6 months of this role. Responsible for driving sales incentives on shifts and being responsible for employees. Motivating the team to provide outstanding customer service for repeated custom.

Volunteer	Mansforth Medical Surgery	September 2013 – March 2013
-----------	---------------------------	-----------------------------

Supporting the team with administration and clerical duties on the front desk. Dealing with patient enquires in a strictly confidential manner. Shadowing GP's on a regular basis to develop my knowledge and carrying out any other duties as required.

### Key Skills and Achievements

- Motivated and enthusiastic attitude towards the Pharmaceutical industry supported by a very successful work experience placement and an A\* in Chemistry A Level.
- The ability to problem solve to a high standard leading to an A grade in Mathematics A Level.
- Effective time management through organising a demanding college workload including four subjects and a First Aid enrichment course.
- Excellent commitment and reliability through 100% attendance at college.
- 'Outstanding Contribution to the Workplace' Award – Won in June 2014 for completing 4 successful work placements in customer focused environments.
- Highly competent in using a vast range of ICT programmes including Excel, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint and Prezi.
- Excellent team player due to my college activities and work experience roles which have been mainly team work related.

### Hobbies and Interests

- A member of the JLC Scary Maths club, to extend knowledge further and compete in challenges with peers.
- Completing wider reading based around academic subjects with particular emphasis on Chemistry journals and updates in the field.
- Football coach for a local post 16 football team in the second division, taking part in weekly team matches and training twice a week.

### References

Referees can be provided upon request.

## WHAT IS A COVERING LETTER?

A covering letter is extremely important as it acts as an introduction to your CV. You will need a tailored covering letter for each job vacancy which you apply for. It should include:

- A discussion on your interest in the vacancy and the organisation.
- Information about your skills, qualities and knowledge which would make you an ideal candidate\*.
- Any further information to explain anything in your CV which the employer may question e.g. low grades, changing courses, gap years, etc.

\*Although this information is in your CV, the covering letter allows you to explain why you think your skills will link well to that specific role.

REMEMBER – YOUR COVERING LETTER IS THE FIRST IMPRESSION WHICH AN EMPLOYER WILL GET OF YOU, SO MAKE SURE IT IS A GOOD ONE!

## HOW DO I STRUCTURE A COVERING LETTER?

We suggest that your covering letter should follow this template:

**Introduction:** Within the introduction, state which position that you are applying for, where you saw the position advertised and any information about the organisation which interests you. You should then explain your current position. (See exemplar.)

**Skills and Personal Attributes:** Within this section, explain how you became interested in this industry and support your answer with examples about work related experience. (See exemplar.)

**Why that Company?** In this paragraph, include information which you have researched about the company to demonstrate that you understand the company's purpose, audience and accomplishments whilst explaining why you want to be a part of it. Make sure that this paragraph is detailed and personalised, as a generic paragraph may cost you an interview. (See exemplar.)

**Closing Statement:** In your closing statement, you should ensure that you come across as an enthusiastic and eager person. Be sure to include a word of thanks, information about your availability and a closing sentence about how you look forward to hearing from them.

Be professional and ensure that you write your covering letter as a business letter. Do not become too personal with employers by always using professional and formal language. See the exemplar on the next page to help you.

## COVERING LETTER EXEMPLAR

John Carnes  
17 Steeple Hill Road,  
Cottingham,  
Hull,  
HU9 4EG  
john.carnes@googlemail.co.uk

17th August 2014  
Mrs S Platt  
Pharmaceutical Manager,  
JH GP Practice,  
Scunthorpe,  
DN15 1AA

Dear Mrs Platt,

RE: Apprentice Pharmacy Assistant – Starting September 2014

I would like to apply for the Pharmacy Assistant Apprenticeship at JH GP Practice, which I have seen advertised at John Leggott College on the Grapevine system. I have recently completed my A Levels at John Leggott College and have successfully achieved admirable grades, including an A\* in Chemistry. As I have completed my courses, I would be able to start work immediately.

Through completing work experience in a range of medical environments, I have been able to identify that my interest lies greatly in medicine. I am intrigued by how and why medicines are used and have a genuine interest in advancements in the medical field. Through my work experience placements, I have identified how pharmacists support physicians, dentists and other medical professionals and I fully understand the importance of having a strong source of knowledge for effective collaborative working. I am keen to expand on my current knowledge through an assistant role, with the intention to become a fully qualified Pharmacist who specializes in pharmaceutical research.

I understand that JH GP Practice has an extremely busy pharmacy where the overall objective is to ensure that patients receive the right medication and excellent customer service. The surgery has grown from strength to strength in having a rise of 14% of patients added to the medical register since 2013. This will have had a positive impact on the sales production of the pharmacy which ensures that the working environment will be very stimulating and full of new challenges and opportunities.

Working in your pharmacy as an apprentice would be an exciting opportunity to extend my knowledge and further my education. I feel that with my relevant work experience and my A Level results, I would be a suitable candidate for this post and I am available for interview at any time. I look forward to hearing from you and please feel free to contact me should you wish to discuss my application further.

Yours sincerely,  
J Carnes  
John Carnes