



# CV and Application Guide

## 2023



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# Solent Futures

### Get your CV or application checked

Drop in to see us, Monday to Friday between 12:30 – 3:30pm, no appointment necessary.

### One-to-one advice

Book a careers guidance appointment for in-depth advice, careers guidance and mock interviews.

### Online resources

Please visit the careers page on the portal to access our careers resources via Solent Futures Online.

### Events and workshops

Look out for employer events, enterprise boot camps, guest speakers and other sessions.

### Jobs and other opportunities

Please visit the careers page on the portal to access Solent Futures Online where you can search for jobs and opportunities.

## Contact us

JM109

email - [solent.futures@solent.ac.uk](mailto:solent.futures@solent.ac.uk)

[careers@solent.ac.uk](mailto:careers@solent.ac.uk)

023 8201 3883

 [solentfutures](#)

 [@solentfutures](#)

The aim of this guide is to support you in creating a CV that is professional and showcases your skills, ability and experience to a future employer. The guide provides information on researching the employer and analysing the job description to help you produce a targeted and professional CV.



# How to prepare to start your CV

The aim of this guide is to support you in creating a CV that is professional and showcases your skills, ability and experience to a future employer. The guide provides information on researching the employer and analysing the job description to help you produce a targeted and professional CV.

## 1. Do some research.

Before you start applying for a job, make sure that you research the employer and have an understanding of who your prospective employer is, their vision and the environment in which they operate. Although you can never know exactly who will be reading your CV/covering letter, you can get to know the company and evidence this knowledge in your application. If your application is tailored towards the specific company and job, you stand a much higher chance of being called for an interview. Research could involve: company website, Twitter feed, mentions in the news, Instagram and other social media.

## 2. Read the job advert and description.

It is essential that you read the advert and job description carefully. The employer will usually tell you what they want from a candidate in these documents, enabling you to tailor your CV and demonstrate the skills and experience you have which are relevant to the post. Start with a highlighter and highlight the key responsibilities, skills, and personal attributes that the employer is looking for. This will really help you to make your application targeted, clear and concise.

## 3. Think about keywords.

If you're applying for a job online, your CV will often need to contain the right keywords to get through to the next stage. Keywords are job-specific phrases and terminology and can include qualifications or areas of expertise. Check the job description to identify what these are and make sure you're including them at natural and appropriate points in your CV. Keywords make it easier for an employer or Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to know you match the role you are applying for.



## 4. Think about your skills.

You will need to use your experience gained during study, work experience, placements, volunteering, clubs, societies, previous careers and part-time work to evidence that you have the competencies that the employer wants. Before you write your CV, application, or cover letter it is good to think about your experience, what skills you have gained and what examples you have to evidence these skills.

## 5. Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)

Did you know that many employers now use an ATS. This allows a computer system to check if your CV meets the minimum requirements. Whether you use a job board, CV database, recruiter or apply directly to a company, it's highly likely that your CV will be analysed by a machine before a human sets eyes on it. And even then, it may only reach a person if the system deems it a good match for their search. These machines are commonly known as Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS). This is why matching your skills to the advert or job description is essential.



# The Living CV

To help you recognise and articulate the skills, knowledge and experience that makes you unique, Solent have created the Living CV. The Living CV programme helps you to reflect on your time at university and turn your degree learning outcomes into a growing collection of employability skills and achievements you can use to impress employers and grow your career. The information below explains the Living CV and prompts you to create and update your own CV regularly during your time at Solent University.

The Living CV programme helps you to complete these four actions:

## 1. Collect

During your time at Solent you will gain valuable skills and attributes through your studies which you can showcase on your CV to let employers know what a great candidate you are for their role or company. At the end of each term, you should be able to reflect on the employability skills you have gained from your course. We recommend you collect these to refer back to later, it will help you develop a stronger awareness of what you have to offer.

## 2. Choose

When you are ready to apply for an opportunity you will need to take your current CV and tailor it to apply for different opportunities. Depending on what you need your CV for, you'll look back through your 'Collect' notes and choose different statements to start writing various elements of your CV. The purpose of this step is to start producing a CV which is tailored for a specific opportunity. Remember employers will often tell you what they are looking for in their job adverts and person specifications.

## 3. Customise

When it comes to putting together your CV, one size doesn't fit all. You may have to create different CV versions if you are targeting different roles and industries. This action not only allow you to select relevant evidence from your 'collect' statements, but it gives you information on how to customise the layout of your Living CV to produce a document that is tailored for a specific role or industry. This will involve updating relevant information, choosing the most suitable layout and designing your CV to suit the opportunity and employer. Customising your CV will give you the best possible chance of impressing an employer.



## 4. Create

Finally, use the 'Create' function to finalise your CV. If you do not have a chosen format already, this function will guide you on how to use the CV Builder tool in Solent Futures Online to create your final Living CV. You can also use your access to the Adobe Creative Cloud to design a more creative CV for that extra wow factor.

You can also have a CV review from Solent Futures so please get in touch via [solent.futures@solent.ac.uk](mailto:solent.futures@solent.ac.uk).

You may be asked as part of your course to create and update a Living CV, you can get started with this through the Living CV programme in Solent Futures Online:

<https://solentfutures.careercentre.me/u/r0u6prac>

Your course team will also be supporting you by providing learning outcomes for your course that will help you to complete the collect section of the Living CV and if you have any questions, please get in touch with them for further information.



# CV example

## structure/content/CV basics

UK CVs are generally no more than two pages, and should be tailored to the role you are applying for.

Below is an example structure for a reverse chronological CV (reverse chronological means your most recent experience in each section goes first). You will see throughout the guide there are examples of different layouts and orders you can use. Remember this is just a guide and often the right CV for you will depend on your own situation. For example many graduates will put their education first. This is because your degree might be the most relevant way to highlight your skills to an employer. If you have industry specific roles in your work history this might be better further up your CV.

### Your name

**Address** (optional)

### Phone number

**Email address**

**LinkedIn** (optional, add this if your LinkedIn is up to date)

**Website** (optional, add this if you have a professional website or portfolio).

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## Summary/Profile

(Choose one of these headers)

A profile section is an introduction to you, if you only had a few lines to make an impression on an employer what would you say? You may wish to follow the format:

- Situation – who you are now, a recent graduate? An experienced customer service professional?
- Skills – check the job description for the role you are applying for, highlight the skills you have that match the ones the company are asking for.
- Purpose – what are you looking to achieve, why are you applying?

Keep this concise no more than 4 lines and remember to tailor to the role, no employer wants to read a generic profile section.

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## Education

(this section should list your relevant education in reverse chronological order)

**Course name | University | Dates from – to | Grade** if you have one.

- Under your degree make sure you highlight skills and experience you have gained.
- Think about key projects, live briefs or Final Major Projects that might interest an employer.
- Highlight where you have gained skills such as teamwork and presentations.
- Sometimes it can be relevant to reference a module, but make sure you make this employer friendly. Employers won't know what the module title 'Intro to film' covers for example.

## Work History/Experience

(this section should include your work history in reverse chronological order, if you have significant work history you should think about what is most relevant)

### Current Job Title | Company | Dates From – To

Include your work history, the most recent goes first (where you have lots of previous employment select the most relevant to expand on).

- Highlight where your skills match the job description.
- Add examples to demonstrate your skills and experience.
- Think about including 4-6 bullet points.
- Lead each sentence with an action verb, find some examples on our convincing language page. Check out page 11.

Using the example structure below can help you to highlight and evidence your skills to an employer.

[action word] [achievement] which led to [quantifiable outcome].

**For example, "Coordinated a social media competition that led to a 10% increase in followers to the company account".**

Remember always ask yourself why you are providing information to an employer, is this information going to help you get to the next stage of the selection process? If not, then you might want to not include this into your CV. Try to avoid repeating yourself, for example, if you have told them, you had key holder responsibilities in one job, there is no need to add this to another role as well, unless you undertook different tasks.

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## Interests and achievements/extracurricular activities

### Can Include:

- Involvement in university clubs
- Training courses (can also include e-learning or distance learning or MOOCs)
- Other relevant skills
- Special awards
- Publications
- Hobbies
- Languages spoken
- Charity or volunteer work
- Caring responsibilities

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## References (Optional)

- You do not need to include references.
- If you have space you may wish to include 'references on request'.
- Remember, any referees should be contacted to let them know you are using them as a reference, so it can be better to wait until you are asked to provide these.

# Convincing language

Using accurate and powerful verbs can help make your CV more interesting and dynamic.

Using verbs at the beginning of sentences can be very powerful.

Here are some examples of words and phrases that you may find useful. Remember that these must be backed up with examples, otherwise they are meaningless.

## Experience

- Demonstrated skills in
- Extensive academic/practical background
- Experience in all aspects of
- Knowledge of
- Proficient in
- Provided assistance to
- Competent in

## Ability

- Trained in
- Proficient in
- Competent in
- Working knowledge of
- Expert in
- Proven ability to
- Professional use of
- Familiar with

## Personal attributes

- Committed to
- Dedicated to
- Enthusiastic
- Actively sought
- Driven by
- Motivated by

## Success

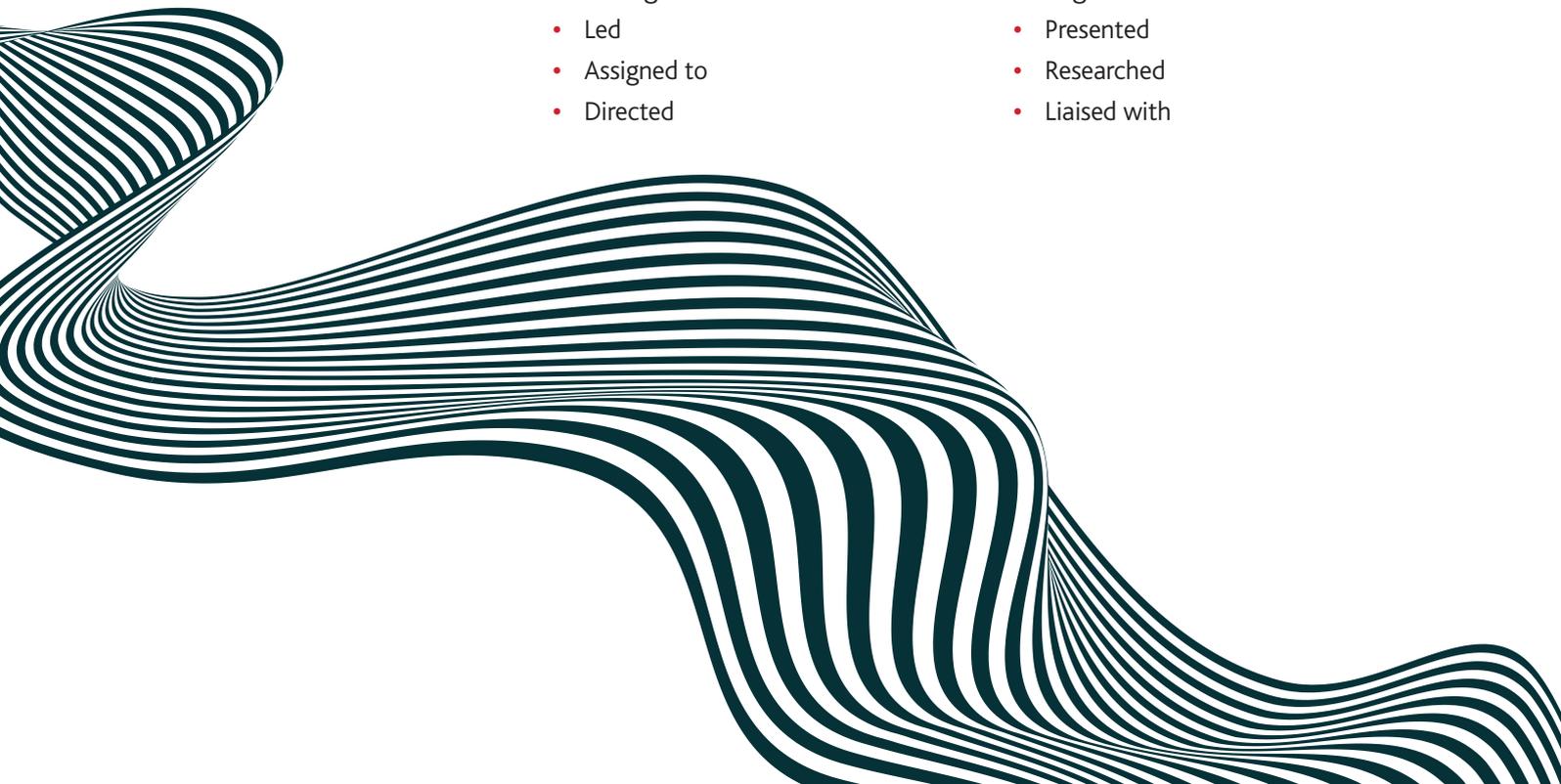
- Promoted to
- Succeeded in
- Proven track record in
- Generated
- Launched
- Expanded
- Rewarded for

## Responsibilities

- Responsible for
- In charge of
- Administered
- Project managed
- Conducted
- Coordinated
- Supervised
- Represented
- Managed
- Led
- Assigned to
- Directed

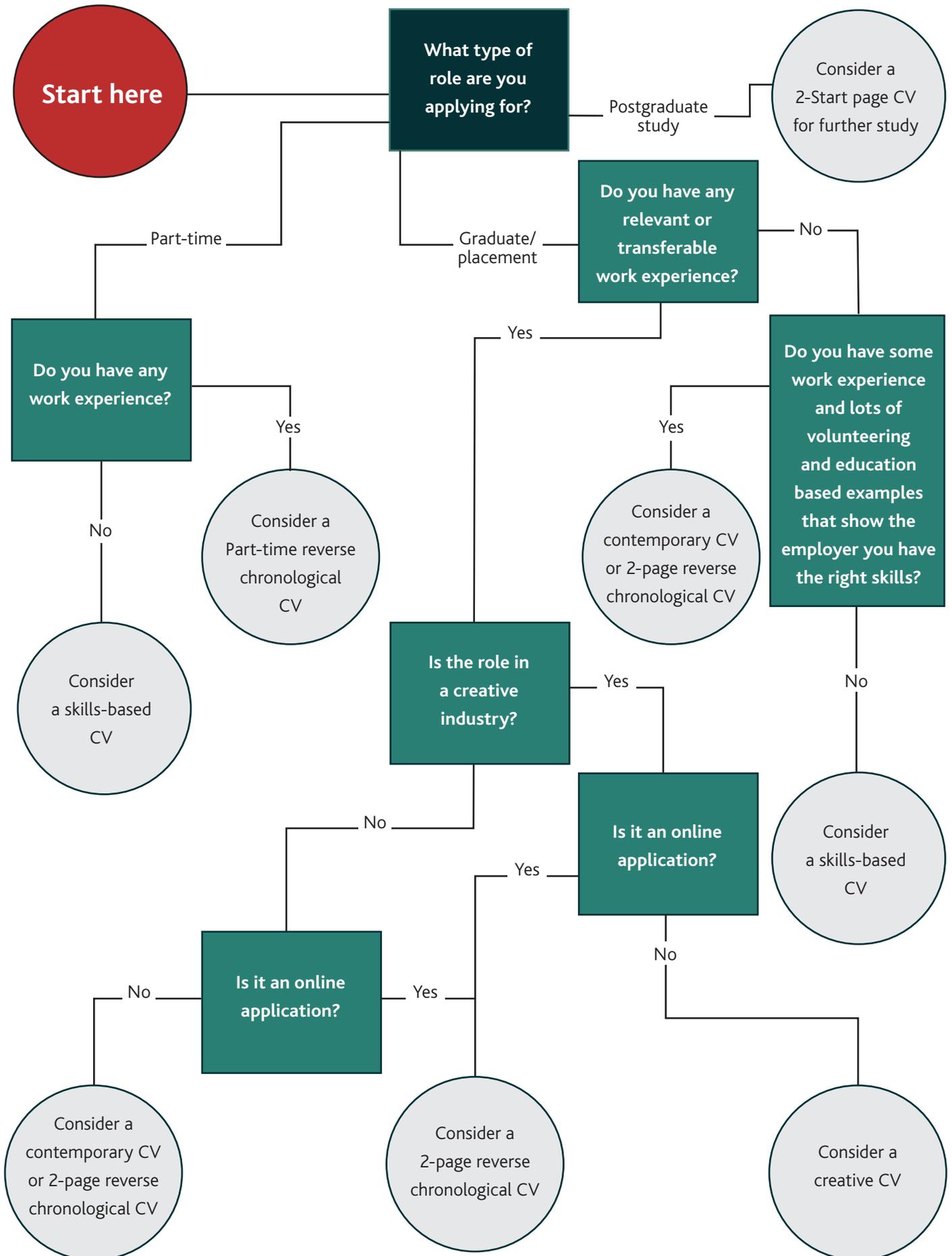
## Tasks

- Analysed
- Evaluated
- Assessed
- Collated
- Created
- Initiated
- Suggested
- Managed
- Organised
- Presented
- Researched
- Liaised with





# Which CV to use?



# Types of CV

<b>Part-time reverse chronological CV</b>	You might want to consider a part-time reverse chronological CV; this would be between 1-2 pages depending on your level of experience. Focus on relevant information from your past work experience which highlights to an employer that you have the skills to undertake their role. Check out page 17 for an example.
<b>Skills-based CV</b>	You may want to consider a skills-based CV. A skills based CV allows you to look at what the employer is asking for, and pick out which skills from clubs, volunteering and education match the employer's requirements. See page 16 for an example of how to do this.
<b>Creative CV</b>	You may wish to consider a creative CV. Remember, this is more than just adding some colour to your CV, it is about thinking about the job role and company and really showcasing your creative skills. For example if you were applying to be a package designer at Kellogg's, putting your CV on a cereal box would be relevant and eye catching. Find out more about creative CVs on pages 19–20
<b>Contemporary CV</b>	You may wish to consider a contemporary CV. These are CVs that use templates from sites like Adobe to give the look of the CV a more modern feel. These are not generally considered creative as you are using a template, but they can show a level of skill for using Adobe or Canva that employers find useful, they can also make your CV stand out. We only recommend these if you are emailing your application, as when uploading to a system there can be an online CV checker that won't be able to read this CV format. Check out page 18 for an example.
<b>2-page reverse chronological CV</b>	You may wish to consider a two page reverse chronological CV. This is a traditional CV that allows you to highlight the experience from your education and work history and match yourself to the employer's requirements. It is also the most likely CV to pass online CV checkers or ATS systems, so it is the sensible option when uploading to an online application. Check out page 14 for an example. Also, have a look at the application guide at the back of this document, as the employer may ask for more than just your CV.
<b>2-page CV for further study</b>	You may wish to consider a two page CV for further study that focuses on your educational skills. This is similar to the traditional CV but allows you to focus a little more on your education and is great when applying for postgraduate courses. See our example on pages 24–25.

## Lola Smith

000 0000 0000

24 Example Street, Southampton

Example@example.com

Lola Smith LinkedIn

### Profile

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I am a recent business management graduate with significant experience in customer service and events management. As the events coordinator for Solent Business society, I have successfully coordinated several events, from the logistical planning and administration to the on-the-day delivery. Having recently graduated I am keen to build on the success of my volunteer events coordinator role and explore opportunities to become an events manager.

### Skills and Abilities

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- Customer Service
- Stock management software
- Teamwork
- Social media platform management
- Canva
- POS systems
- CRM Systems
- Event management systems – Eventbrite
- Budget management
- Meeting sales targets
- Strong communication and presentation ability
- Microsoft – Including Word, Excel and PowerPoint

### Education

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#### **BA (Hons) Business Management**

**2020 – 2023 | Solent University, Southampton**

- Supported B&Q to resolve a business issue, pitching a solution to their senior managers, which was then taken forward for further development.
- Developed a business plan to pitch for university funding to support my freelance career.
- Gave regular, short presentations to seminar groups as part of a peer mentoring project.

### Experience

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#### **Customer Service Representative**

**Customers Are Us | June 2018 – Present**

- Manage inbound calls, dealt with questions efficiently and effectively and input data into departments Customer Relationship Management system, Dynamics.
- Support with complex queries for pensions and life insurance policies, signposting to external agencies when required.
- Proactively manage complaints in a friendly and calm manner, ensuring customers knew their next steps.
- Rewarded for excellent customer service by winning the company's yearly customer service award in 2022.

## Other Achievements

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- Multilingual including English, Spanish and German
- Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award
- Won customer service award for outstanding service

### Customer Service Assistant

#### The Shope Around the Corner | August 2016 – June 2018

- Regularly exceeded sales targets through attentive customer service and product recommendations.
- Processed cash and credit card transactions accurately and efficiently.
- Trained and supported new members of staff on how to use the retail point of sale, cash management and order management systems.

## Volunteering Experience

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### Event Coordinator

#### Solent Business Society | September 2023 – Current

- Coordinate with other society members to create a termly events plan.
- Design and create social media posts for Instagram to promote events using Canva.
- Liaise with the society treasurer to ensure events are within budget.
- Create event information pages and tickets using Eventbrite.
- Implemented a new reminder process which led to a 10% increase in event attendees.

Below you will find a skills-based CV example, we have included an example advert text and highlighted where the skills and experience requested by the employer have been highlighted in the CV.

## Creative Marketing Intern

**BlogBlogBlog | London | Competitive**

We're looking for a creative Marketing Intern to join our team. The position requires a background in **customer facing positions, writing and research**. The successful candidate will be working closely with our marketing managers to support with **key campaigns**, using both **online and print media**. We will provide the opportunity for the successful candidate to meet and make connections with senior leaders within the agency. The ideal candidate will be **analytical and detail-oriented** with strong writing skills and have **excellent computer skills**.

# Amanda Pope

000 0000 0000 | AmandaPope@madeup.com | Mandy P(LinkedIn)

## Profile

Highly organised English student, and blogger, with **strong communication skills** developed through my role as a course representative and my work experience as a camp councillor. I am currently looking to use my **blogging experience** to undertake a placement in communications and marketing.

## Skills

### Verbal Communication / Customer facing

- As a camp councillor I supported with issues such as homesickness, **communication problems** and conflict resolution. **Maintained a positive and supportive relationship** with my group over the summer season.
- Responsible for **collating and presenting back feedback**, complaints and suggestions from my course group to senior members of the university as a course rep.

### Written communication

- **Produce essays, and reports** that met the requirements of my course achieving a 65% or higher.
- Research and produce regular **engaging content** for my blog.

### IT Skills

- **Skilled in the use of Microsoft Office applications including Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint.**
- Self-taught **Adobe creative suite** and **square space** to use with my blog

### Analytical

- **Monitoring the analytic tools** on my blog and professional social media accounts to keep track of popular posts and spikes in engagement.

## Work experience

Camp Counsellor | USA Summer Camp | May 2022 to Sep 2022

## Education and qualifications

Solent University - Bachelor's degree English BA (Hons) 2024

Southampton Sixth Form College - A Level English - C History - B Maths - A 2022

## Achievements

- Solent University Course Representative 2023-2024
- Designed, created and maintained a Lifestyle Blog '*Life with Mandy*' during my degree.
- I am fluent in French and German to a conversational level having lived in both these countries.

## **Mathew Macmillan**

0123456789 | KM@email.com

### Professional summary

I am a confident communicator with a background in front of house customer service, currently studying for a Global MBA at Solent University. Highly skilled in dealing with complex customer enquiries, in person and over the phone. I have a proven track record of providing excellent service, having won a customer service award from my current employer.

### Professional Experience

#### **Customer Service Advisor |The Clothing Shop| October 2020–present**

- Perform regular stock rotation to ensure the shop floor is properly organised as per regulations.
- Answering and responding to customer complaints with a high level of professionalism
- Helping answer queries with customers, including sourcing items, refunds, and returns.
- Ensuring the stock room is in a clean and organised state, helping colleagues handle stock queries more efficiently.
- Encouraging customers to sign up for the company newsletter to increase customer retention and brand advocacy.
- Working with colleagues and visual merchandising teams to properly display new clothing ranges and promotional materials.
- Assisting customers with filling in customer surveys, helping the branch build positive reviews in the process.

#### **Shop floor assistant | Anothershop| August 2019–October 2020**

- Maintained an up-to-date knowledge of store policy regarding, payments, returns and exchanges.
- Maintained the physical organisation of the shop stock and rotas, customer data entry and time-management.

### Education

Global MBA | July 2022 | Solent University | Southampton

Business management BA(Hons) | July 2021 | Solent University | Southampton

A level | July 2020 Eastleigh college | Eastleigh | English A, Maths B, French, C

GCSE | July 2018 My School | Eastleigh | 11 GCSE grade A-C

### Hobbies

Member of the football team, acting as social secretary, coordinating fund raising events and team activities.



## CONTACT

Email - M.Roberts@email.com  
Phone - 077678765  
LinkedIn - MollyRoberts  
Portfolio - www.MRgames.com

## EDUCATION

**BA (HONS) Computer games design**  
**Solent University | 2020 – 2023**

- Created and prototyped compelling games, including developing game concepts and storylines
- Pitched game ideas to a panel of my peers.
- Coordinated a team of designers in a computer game competition, where we achieved second place for our submission.

## Skills

Unreal  
Unity  
Visual Studio  
3D studio max  
ZBrush  
Substance

# Molly Roberts

Game Developer

## PROFILE

Goal-oriented game developer, with a degree in computer games design including a placement year that provided experience in game-level design and animation. Competent with script coding and passionate about the gaming industry, I am seeking a position as a Game developer to allow me to build and design games that inspire others.

## EXPERIENCE

**Customer assistant | 2022 -present | The Game Shop | Southampton**

- Support customers with queries, providing expert guidance on gaming platforms.
- Cross selling products that would benefit the customer, regularly achieving customer assistant of the month.
- Training and coaching new team members, acting as their shop floor support.

**Gameplay Developer Placement | 2021 -2022 | Solent Games | Southampton**

- Attend and participate in client meetings to identify project requirements.
- Wrote code to implement design ideas.
- Worked collaboratively with team members to improve game play design.
- Identified and fixed bugs.
- Created and managed important documentation.



## Creative CVs

A creative CV is simply a CV that utilizes creative elements within it. Some are very simple and have used colours and an image; others use multiple creative techniques to make a big first impression. If you plan on using a creative CV to showcase your creativity to an employer, make sure it is all your own work and not copied from someone else. Employers want to see what you can do. So, think of your CV as an extension of your creative personality.

Like a more traditional CV, content is key, so make sure you start with content and then think about your presentation and design. If an employer has asked, in the application process, for you to show your creativity, then this would be the perfect time to use a creative CV. Make sure that the creative skills you're showcasing are relevant to those that you might need to use in the role. If your employer research finds that they use words such as 'quirky', 'fun', 'daring creativity' to describe themselves or their employees, then this is practically an open invite to use a creative CV to apply to them.

Creative CVs can come in many formats, including infographic, video, animated, 3D, and even Instagram-presented. Think carefully about what you feel will be well received by the industry/employer you are applying to, while ensuring your CV reflects your personality and skills in a professional manner.

### Examples of industries where creative CVs are common:

- Art and design (e.g., graphic, product, fashion, web)
- Illustration, animation and visual effects
- Film and media production
- Advertising and marketing

However, do not assume that just because you are applying to an employer within the creative industries that they will automatically love a creative CV. You are advised to do a bit of research first and if possible, speak to others that work there and ask what their advice would be.

Finally, some roles require you to upload your CV to an applicant tracking system (ATS). If this is the case, do not use a creative CV as the ATS won't be able to read it and you will be rejected. You are advised to use the **CV360 tool** on Solent Futures Online as this checks that your CV is optimised for use with an ATS.

# Top tips for creative CVs

## Content

The way you present your CV is your choice and there is no correct way. However, you may want to consider the following when thinking about the style and presentation:

- Content first, then design. Remember that regardless of the format, tools, and techniques you use to communicate, the most important part of a CV is the words within it.
- Tailor your content to the industry/company you are applying to. Research is key!
- If writing a profile section, think about your key specialisms and influences, mediums in which you work, what you enjoy, and your USP (unique selling point). Make sure your profile reads well – it's likely to be the first thing an employer reads.
- Highlight your key selling points, skills (creative and technical), knowledge and experience. How have you got these? Through your degree? Freelancing? You may have also gained experience through live projects, competitions, work experience, and exhibitions.
- Make sure you add links to your professional online presence, such as your portfolio, blog, LinkedIn, Instagram and other social media platforms. These could showcase your skills and make you more employable.
- Prioritise content effectively based on what you feel will help you stand out and be of most interest to the employer.

## Design

- Make sure that the design is clear and concise and doesn't overshadow the content.
- Avoid using capitalisation for the text as this can be hard to read.
- Think about the colours used and attention to detail.
- Think about the design you use and whether it complements the style of your other self-promotion such as online portfolios, LinkedIn, business cards, etc. This helps create your own personal brand.
- Keep your creative CV to one page if possible.

If you are wanting to make a visually appealing CV but are not skilled in using creative tools, you could investigate free downloadable templates instead. Here are a few suggestions to get you started:

**Adobe Creative**

**Canva**

**MS Word templates**

## Resources for ideas and inspiration

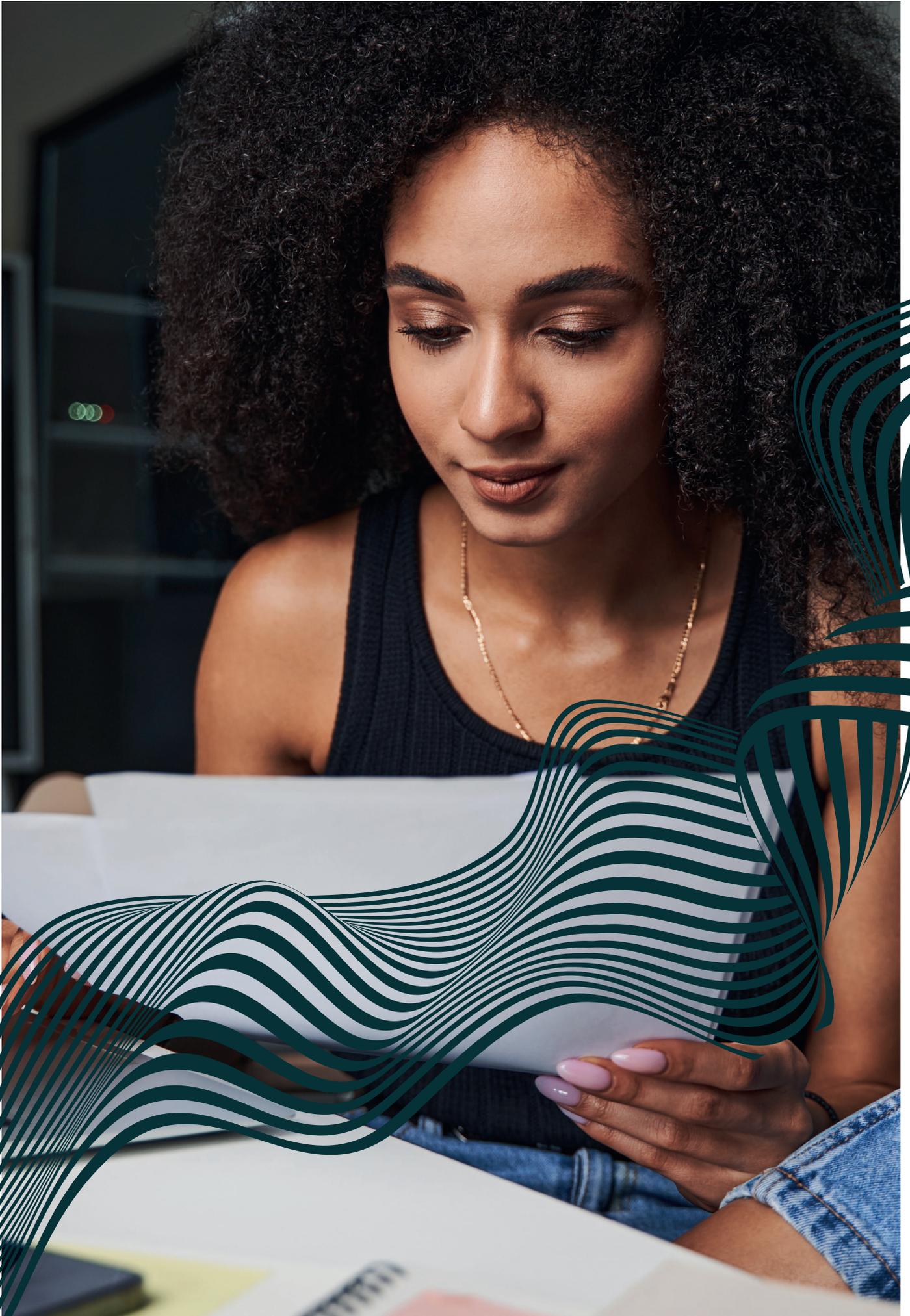
- **Creative CVs - Prospects**
- **5 tips to create an infographic CV – Solent Futures Online**
- **Creative resume designs – Bashooka**
- **Examples of creative CVs - Guru**
- **Creative CVs in pictures – The Guardian**
- **Artist CV - Artquest**
- **Is Instagram- the new CV? - Elle**
- **Pinterest – search for creative CVs**

## Video CV

Video CVs can be a powerful way of getting you noticed. For more advice on video CVs such as what to include and tips on creating effective self-promotion, check out:

- **4 steps to crafting your video CV – Solent Futures Online**
- **Top dos and don'ts of making a video CV – Solent Futures Online**
- **Create a great video CV - Prospects**
- **How to make a video CV - Totaljobs**
- **How to create a video CV - Indeed**





# CV for further study

An application process for further study is likely to involve submitting a completed application form, a personal statement, and contact details for referees. 'Supporting documents' may include course transcripts, academic certificates, a research proposal, portfolio of work, and a CV.

CVs for further study are usually two pages in length, and focus on academic skills and experience, providing more detail about modules studied (starting with the most relevant subject or highest mark), projects or dissertations completed, and how these are relevant to the postgraduate course you are applying for.

Academic admissions tutors will expect your CV to be tailored to the programme of study you are applying for. You will need to demonstrate that you have subject knowledge and relevant skills/abilities such as technical skills, collecting data, critical analysis, research, project management, teamwork, communication and, making presentations.

Give prominence to unique selling points and relevant experience that demonstrates commitment to your chosen area of study, such as: student membership of a relevant professional organisation, attending conferences, published papers/articles, awards and prizes for

academic achievement, and securing funding or scholarships. In your own time you may have completed a relevant online course or personal project or written a blog/magazine article related to your area of interest.

A CV submitted as part of an application for PhD study can be longer than two pages. It should emphasise research interests and evidence enthusiasm for the study topic; showcasing academic excellence, and research skills and experience gained through masters and undergraduate dissertations. If, alongside the PhD, you will be undertaking some teaching hours, include relevant experience of working with students.

A third page provides an opportunity to present more detailed information about any fellowships, funding, work published, conference presentations, seminar papers and attendance, and any additional relevant courses completed.

For further information and examples, see:  
**Academic CV example | [Prospects.ac.uk](https://www.prospects.ac.uk)**  
**Masters CVs | [FindAMasters.com](https://www.findamasters.com)**  
**PhD CVs | [FindAPhD.com](https://www.findaphd.com)**





# River Quinn

**Pronouns:** he/his | **r.quinn@email.net** | **0665 9810 44710** | **Hampshire** [www.linkedin.com/in/r+quinn](http://www.linkedin.com/in/r+quinn)

- Award winning Sport Management undergraduate with module results demonstrating consistent high achievement and successful application of research-informed learning.
- Management and leadership skills developed through paid and voluntary work experience in sport and business sectors.
- Seeking to utilise academic interests in governance, sports policy and consultancy to pursue a Masters level qualification.

## Education

**BSc (Hons) Sport Management | 2:1 expected | Hampshire University 2021–2024**

Degree endorsed/accredited by the Chartered Institute for Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMPSA)

Selected Management degree pathway option – developed critical knowledge, understanding and application of sport sociology, development, and sports policy and practice across a range of sport industry settings at operational, management and strategic level.

High achievement in the following modules: Research Methods (87%), Strategic Management and Consultancy (82%), Event Leadership and Marketing (77%) and Policy in Practice (74%).

Appointed project leader during Consultancy module, managed a team of 4 to problem solve a simulated business scenario; co-presented solutions to class, a panel of academics and external employers.

**Dissertation topic:** *'The Daily Mile'* initiative: an evaluation of impact and sustainability.

Critical analysis of methods used to engage key stakeholders and develop partnerships across the US, UK, Europe, and Commonwealth Countries.

**Areas of research focus included:** effectiveness of global marketing and communication strategies, consistency of implementation, programme sustainability, and quantitative and qualitative analysis of stakeholder relationships (governments, national public bodies, local authorities, governing bodies, and private sector organisations).

Mentored two first year students for six months, to help them settle into the course; addressed questions on module specific content and study skills.

Awarded second year student prizes for excellent academic performance, and significant positive contribution to the student experience (peer mentoring).

Appointed third year course representative, attending Student Union training, gathering module feedback from peers, and participating in monthly staff-student committee meetings.

Attended Hampshire Sports Conference, May 2023: networked with keynote speakers, including international sports science consultants and sport and exercise psychologists.

### **Extra-curricular online courses completed 2021-2024:**

*LinkedIn Learning:* Career Essentials in Business Analysis. Project Management Foundations

*Google Digital Garage:* Manage a Project with Digital Tools

### **A levels & GCSEs Hampshire School & Sixth Form 2017-2021**

Achieved 3 A levels: Business (B), Information Technology (B), English (C) and 8 GCSEs (grades 8-5)

Co-created and managed Sixth Form Business & Economics A level course blog website; posted monthly commentary on topical business news and coordinated regular weekly issue-based contributions from peers. Grew blog readership from 18 to 62 students within 4 months.

## **Relevant experience - voluntary roles**

### **Sports Club Treasurer Hampshire University Student Union June 2022 – October 2023**

- Managed a budget of £3,000, and ensured that all club activities adhered to the Students' Union financial regulations
- Enforced payment of fees, including club membership, BUCS fee and online payments
- Controlled and authorised expenditure, developed a detailed spending plan for the academic year before the start of Freshers' Week, ensured club remained within budget
- Compiled detailed financial reports and presented account updates to club committee meetings
- Co-ordinated annual fundraiser event, worked in partnership with club Chair, and liaised with Student Union marketing team to secure £800 of external sponsorship for club merchandise.

### **Referee Appointment Secretary Hampshire Football Association February 2022 – September 2023**

Responsible for administration relating to the appointment of referees to appropriate league games and competitions, within the City of Southampton Youth League.

- Allocated appropriate level of referee and assistant referee to matches, including appointment of referees seeking promotion
- Notified clubs of their allocated match official in accordance with current league rules
- Maintained accurate records of referee appointments, to enable the monitoring and frequency of individual referee appointing

## **Employment history**

Sales Adviser (part time) Spark Department Store, Hampshire July 2019 – present

- Providing excellent customer service (95% positive customer review rating), operating tills, handling cash and debit transactions; assisting and advising customers on products and providing alternatives when appropriate
- Supporting a team of 24 staff to help exceed sales targets by 2.5%, resulting in an end-of-year bonus
- Ability to work well under pressure, in a busy retail environment, managing time and prioritising tasks such as serving customers, processing deliveries and creating promotional displays.

## **Interests and additional achievements**

**Digital:** Proficient in Microsoft Office, Adobe InDesign; social media competency (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram); working knowledge of HTML and CSS with basic JavaScript; experience with CMS including WordPress and HootSuite.

**Fundraising:** Annual participation in Cancer Research UK Race for Life, generating £2,600 in sponsorship.

**Languages:** English (fluent), French (conversational).

**Driving:** Full UK driving license.

# International students

You need to be aware that CVs in the UK may differ from your home country. You will be expected to identify relevant skills for a job vacancy and provide examples of how you are developing those skills. Reflect positively on your international background and experience and write about the aspects of your background, that could help you make a distinct contribution including:

## Language skills

Your knowledge of more than one language could help an organisation communicate with their overseas markets or suppliers.

## Cultural awareness

You could use your cultural background to advise and inform an organisation on how to make the right impact on their international customers and clients.

## Creating your UK CV

You can go onto Solent Futures Online for detailed advice on how to build a CV, but at a minimum remember that your CV should include:

- Personal details: name, email, telephone and LinkedIn (but only if up-to-date).
- Personal profile.
- Education/qualifications.
- Career history, work experience and volunteering.
- Skills.
- Achievements and interests.



## A CV in the UK does not normally include your:

Nationality.

Date of birth.

Photo.

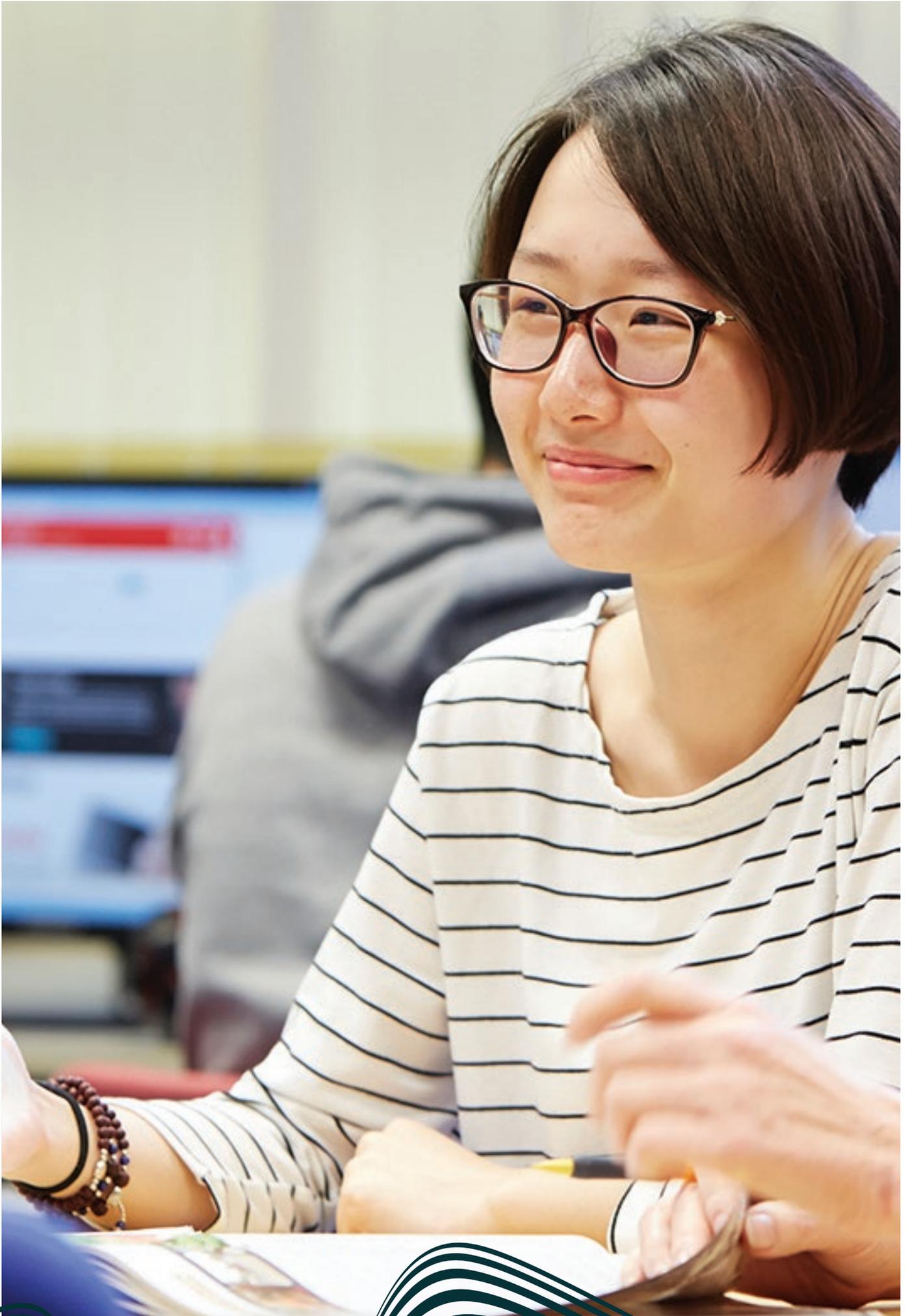
Gender.

## Workplace etiquette

Understanding how to behave in the workplace is something all students and recent graduates have to learn, but it may be more challenging when you are navigating cultural differences as well. Solent Futures Online has some information on workplace etiquette that may be useful.

## Visa requirements

If you are not sure about your visa restrictions, please check <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration>. There is no requirement to declare your visa status on your CV; however, you will need to declare this to the employer, should you be offered the job.



# Covering letter/ email

A covering letter or email is an essential part of the application process, whether you are applying speculatively or for an advertised position.

You can normally attach a covering letter to an online application. The covering letter is used to introduce yourself to an employer, and to highlight key skills and the reasons for your application. You can use the body of the email if you are applying via email or attach it as a pdf.

The following layout provides a guide to the information you might want to include in your covering letter/email – the order of the paragraphs is flexible.

## Example layout of covering letter or email:

### Date

### Employer's address

**Salutation** • Dear Ms Smith or Dear Sir or Madam

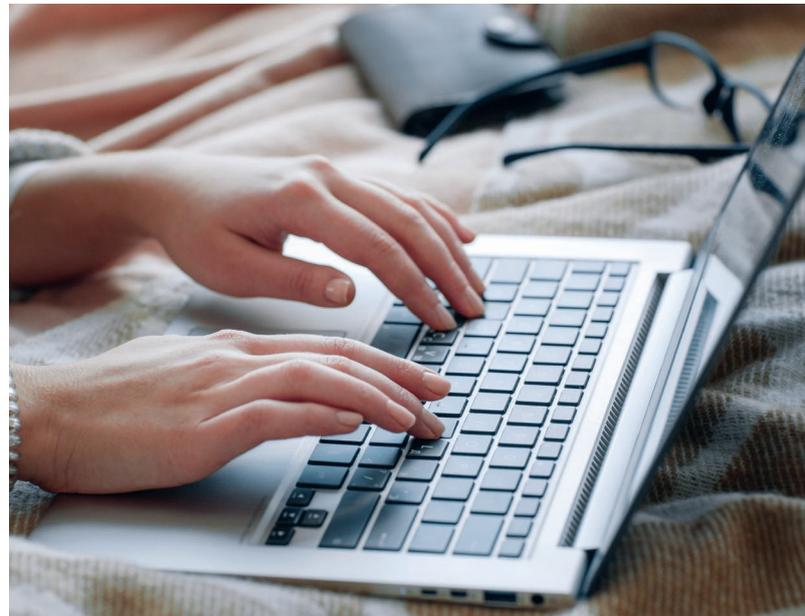
- Get a contact name where possible as this creates a good first impression.

### Heading

- Job title/job reference/purpose of letter Introduction
- Indicate whether you are responding to an advertised job or applying speculatively.
- Introduce your current situation.
- Make clear what you are hoping to achieve.
- Demonstrate your enthusiasm for and knowledge of the job.

### Your main strengths clearly linked to the person specification

- Convince the employer you are the right person for the job by highlighting relevant experience and skills.
- Emphasise key features from your CV.
- Give evidence of relevant skills, using examples from your coursework, employment and other interests.



### Knowledge of the job and company

- Say why you want the job and show you have researched the company, profession or job.
- Communicate what interests you about the organisation.
- Describe how you would be an asset to the organisation.

### Positive ending

- Restate your interest and summarise your suitability and enthusiasm for the company.
- Be proactive and state how you will follow up the letter.
- End the letter positively and remember to sign it.

### Valediction

- 'Yours sincerely' (when you know the recipient's name) or 'Yours faithfully' (for Dear Sir or Madam)
- Your name
- Enc/s (if you are enclosing your CV or application)

**Kitty Bennet**  
**12 Solent Street**  
**Southampton**  
**SO22 4PM**

**13 April 2023**

Ms Gail James,  
Fashion World  
103 Example Street  
Southampton  
SO11 4PM

Dear Ms James,

I am excited to apply for the Graduate Merchandiser role at Fashion world. As a recent graduate with a degree in Fashion buying and merchandising and a passion for the fashion industry, I am eager to begin my career in buying and believe that Fashion World would be the perfect place to start.

Throughout my academic career, I have gained a strong foundation in fashion buying and merchandising, as well as an understanding of the broader fashion industry. I have experience in analysing trends, product development, retail operations, and supply chain management. As part of my degree, I undertook a project to support a local business with their trend forecasting, I conducted market research, surveying potential customers and analysed the previous year's sales, I was able to propose a plan to the company director which was taken forward and resulted in increased sales of 10% on the previous year.

During my time at university, I had the opportunity to work for our in-house fashion store, RE:SO where I gained hands-on experience in merchandising. I was responsible for maintaining the stock within the store and ensuring we had items that would sell with our target market. During my time with RE:SO I was able to gain practical experience of the in-house software to manage stock levels and pay our purchase orders. I also trained other team members to use this software and implemented a written training guide to ensure consistency.

The job advert asks for strong interpersonal skills, through my part-time work as a sales associate I am well practiced at dealing with customers queries, handling complaints, and ensuring that customers feel supported during their time in store. I was also responsible for responding to queries on our Facebook and Instagram pages, resolving and escalating queries.

I am keen to work for Fashion World as I have been following the company on LinkedIn for a few years now and your recent campaign on Ethical Fashion fits with my career aspirations to promote sustainability in the fashion industry. My dissertation was about the impact of fast fashion on our climate, I used your company as an example of how business can make a profit but also be sustainable.

Thank you for considering my application. I am excited about the opportunity to contribute to your team and look forward to the chance to further discuss my qualifications.

Kind Regards  
Kitty Bennet





# Application Guide

Despite changes to the way employers receive applications now, with video CVs, creative CVs and LinkedIn profiles becoming more popular, many organisations will still request a completed application form.

It's less likely to be a printed and handwritten form, and more likely to be an online form. Either way, an application form is your chance to let an employer know how and why you're perfect for the job.

This guide will give you useful hints, tips and advice to help you complete any job application form.



## Who uses application forms and why?

Many large organisations, graduate recruiters, local councils and government departments, as well as the wider public sector, will require you to complete an application form.

This can be for a number of reasons, such as:

- Shortlisting method prior to sending out interview invites
- Requirement set by the human resources department
- Making the recruitment process more efficient, practical and systematic
- Allowing the process to be more consistent, with set questions to answer
- Method of obtaining information that isn't always included in a CV
- Way to assess candidates' motivation
- Assessing candidates' essential skills, such as spelling, grammar and punctuation.

# Preperation

Before starting any piece of written work you should research and prepare carefully and thoroughly – and an application form is no exception. Use the checklist below before starting any applications.

<p><b>Gather all relevant information that may be required, so that you don't have to keep stopping to find information out, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National Insurance number</li><li>• Names, addresses and phone numbers for all previous and current employers</li><li>• Dates of your periods of work and study</li><li>• Exam results and dates</li><li>• Reasons for leaving previous employment</li><li>• Starting and leaving salary of previous employment</li><li>• Contact details of referees</li></ul>	
<p><b>Research the employer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read any information included with the application pack</li><li>• Take a look at the recruitment and other relevant pages of their website</li><li>• Search for and follow them on LinkedIn</li></ul>	
<p><b>Research the job role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read the job description</li><li>• Identify the key skills and qualities required and consider examples you can use to show you have these</li></ul>	
<p><b>Read the completion instructions carefully before starting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can you save sections and go back to them later?</li><li>• Do you need to complete it all in one go?</li><li>• Does it time out if you don't interact with it for a while?</li><li>• Check carefully which sections you need to complete as you may not be required to do all of them</li><li>• Can you attach additional documents such as your CV or supporting statements?</li></ul>	
<p><b>Print it out and practise first</b></p>	

# Section by section

Although application forms can vary quite significantly from one organisation to the next, this guide will talk you through how to complete each section by using the Solent application form as an example.

## Which job?

In most cases each job role being advertised will have a reference number as well as a title. This is usually to enable human resources staff or the computer system to quickly sort relevant applications into the correct place.

It's essential to get this bit right as you don't want to end up applying for a completely different job to the one you intended!

Application for the post of:	
Vacancy Ref no. / Post Title	

## Personal details

This should be the easiest part of the application form.

But remember to be consistent – don't refer to yourself as one thing on an application form and something different on LinkedIn or your CV. Think about which email address to use and make sure you check it regularly. If you still have the same email account that you set up in school, you might want to consider changing this to a more professional sounding email address now. You don't want your potential new boss having to contact you at fluffybunny95@hitmail.com!

Personal details		
Surname:	First name:	Title:
Email Address:		
Home Address:	Telephone Number:	
	Mobile Number:	
	NI Number:	

### Tips:

1. Enter the job title and reference code accurately.
2. Use your full and proper name.
3. Use a professional-sounding email address.

## Qualifications

It's rare to find an application form that doesn't ask for details of your education and qualifications, but the amount of room provided for you to enter this information can vary. If it's a paper form, there isn't much you can do to expand box sizes so, if you think you need it, check to see if it's OK to attach additional pages to enable you to include everything you need to.

### Qualifications

Please include all relevant qualifications you currently hold and those you are working towards.

Qualification	Subject	Grade	Place of Study	Dates from/to

If the form is online, have a look to see if the boxes will expand or if there is the facility to add extra lines. Again, if this isn't possible, look to see if you're able to attach additional documents when submitting the application form. You could also try consolidating qualifications into boxes rather than giving every subject its own line, like in the example below:

Qualification	Subject	Grade	Place of Study	Dates from/to
A Level	English Literature	A	Itchen College	2015 - 2017
A Level	Art & Design	B	Itchen College	2015 - 2017

would become:

Qualification	Subject	Grade	Place of Study	Dates from/to
A Level	English Literature, Art & Design	A, B	Itchen College	2015 - 2017

But what is important is that you include as many details as you can that they have asked for. If it doesn't state a preference, always put your most recent qualification first and work backwards—this is often called reverse chronological order. Remember to fill in every box – it's not OK to leave dates or grades blank.

### Tips:

1. Be concise.
2. Enter in reverse chronological order.
3. Complete every box.

## Professional memberships

As a graduate who is new into the job market, this section might be one that you won't have anything to put in at the moment. But it could be that through your course you were a student member of a professional body, so if you're unsure, check with your tutor.

### Examples from Solent include:

- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) – Membership is built into the MA in Human Resource Management.
- Association of Photographers (AOP) – Solent's photography programmes are affiliated with the AOP, allowing students to obtain student membership for free.
- Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) – Students who complete the MSc Shipping Operations can apply for associate membership of the IMarEST upon graduation.

When completing this section, state which professional body it was. The class of membership should be stated on your membership card and will usually be student, associate or full. The 'date' is the date that your membership first started.

Professional memberships		
Professional body	Class of Membership	Date

## Current or most recent employment

This section is relatively self-explanatory. You're being asked to put the details of the most recent job you held or the job you are currently in. Sometimes within this section you'll be asked for the reason for leaving. You need to be honest without being negative about a role or employer.

The objective of an application form is to get you an interview invite, so providing negative information, such as being fired from your last job, may give an employer an excuse not to interview you.

Current or most recent employer:	
Employer's Name and Address:	
Position Held:	
Start Date:	Salary:
Date Left / Notice Required:	

## Employment history

Just like the previous section, this section is relatively self-explanatory but there are a few things that may trip you up here. Remember to read any instructions properly and follow them implicitly. If there are no instructions, the general rule is that you would put your most recent role at the top and then work backwards. Some employers will want the details of every job you've ever had, while others state that they only want to know about roles you've held in the past five years.

### Application for the post of:

Dates from/to	Employer	Job Title	Reason for leaving
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## References

When completing an application form, you'll often have to supply at least two references.

Application forms usually ask for the contact details of your referees.

Be courteous and always ask your referees' permission before you pass on their details.

## Employer reference

An employer reference can come from a placement, part-time work, work experience or volunteering opportunity. These references often outline your work skills and how well you worked in a team – these opinions are usually very valuable to new employers. References from family and friends are not acceptable, even if they have employed you.

## Academic reference

If you have only had one period of employment, one of your references may need to be an academic reference. At Solent, the Student Hub can supply an academic reference but this will only confirm your course, study dates and award. An academic member of staff, such as your tutor or course leader, can provide you with a personal reference, but it will not be written on University notepaper or signed using their University title.

## Personal statement

This is usually the section on an application form with the most amount of space. Take this as a big hint that this is the section where the employer expects you to have the most to say.

### Relevant experience/reason for applying

Please describe and provide examples of how you meet the criteria outlined on the person profile for the role.

## Do not leave this space empty

This is, arguably, the most important section on the application form. Surprisingly, it's the one that a lot of candidates will either leave blank or just write the bare minimum in.

This section is your opportunity to sell yourself to the employer and should be thought about and planned very carefully.

Watch out for word or character limits. If they have provided a fixed space, attempt to fill the whole space. If the space provided is not enough, check to see if you're able to attach an additional sheet, but try not to ramble. Remember, employers do not have unlimited amounts of time to read applications.

Despite often being called the personal statement, don't let this title mislead you. Employers, at this stage, generally do not care about your hobbies and interests. What they want to know is: can you do the job that you have applied for? Do not treat this section in the same way as you would have treated a UCAS personal statement – despite having the same title, they are very different things.

### How to complete this section:

- Read the instructions on the application form and stick to them.
- Look at the job description and highlight or make a note of everything the employer wants that you have.
- Write down your reasons for wanting the job.
- Write down why you want to work for that particular employer.
- Create a Word document first and then either copy and paste or transcribe this into the application form.
- Split your answer into sections to make it easier to organise what you want to say and for an employer to quickly see the important information. You could use the words you highlighted in the job description as subheadings.
- Write using full sentences broken up into small paragraphs.

# Personal statement examples

It's important to tailor the personal statement to the role you're applying for. Take a highlighter to the job description and make sure you include everything the employer is looking for that you have.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### Children's Sport Coach

**Location**

London

**Employer**

UK Sport

**Hours**

10 hours per week Monday to Friday

**Job Description**

We are looking for a **confident** and dedicated **leader** who is able to work as part of our growing team. We would like somebody who has a wealth of **knowledge** in sport coaching, teaching or childcare and can lead a group of children to work towards their long-term development. You must have a **passion** for what we do and be able to contribute to the continuous progression of the club.

**Daily Tasks Include:**

- **Delivering fun and engaging sport sessions** for children ranging from 18 months to 13 years.
- **Supporting new coaches** in their development and helping progress them to a lead coach status.
- **Liaising with customers to provide feedback**, to discuss their child's development and to promote upcoming events and terms.
- Maintaining **health and safety** standards.
- **Promoting the brand** in a positive way at all times.
- **Setting up and packing down** sport equipment.

**Essential Requirements:**

- Minimum 2 years' **coaching experience**.
- Minimum **level 2** in any chosen sport.
- Previous experience of **leading** sport coaching sessions or **managing** a group of children within an education environment.
- Excellent **verbal communication skills**.
- Be comfortable speaking to **parents** and children.
- Be comfortable liaising with school staff.
- **Experience** within early years or childcare.



## Example

The following example shows how to address each of the highlighted points from the job description.

I believe I am suitable for the Children's Sport Coach role as I meet all of the criteria listed in the job specification. I will be graduating this year with a BA (Hons) Sport Coaching and Sport Development degree from Solent University. I have so far finished years 1 and 2, with a first overall, and am currently on track to do the same in my final year. I am very **passionate** about coaching children and young people. I enjoy helping others and fully understand the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle. I have an extensive **knowledge of sport coaching** which I have gained through my degree studies, as well as through the work placements and part-time jobs I have undertaken.

My primary sport – in which I have a **level 2 coaching award** – is gymnastics but I also have a keen interest in trampolining and recently completed the level 1 coaching award in this. Prior to undertaking the coaching awards I was actively involved in both gymnastics and trampolining, and competed at county level on the vault. I believe I can bring my **experience** of being coached as well as my theoretical and practical **knowledge** of delivering coaching into this role.

As a member of my local gymnastics club, I volunteer as a coach twice a week. This involves **setting up and tidying away** the equipment prior to and at the end of each session, supervising the children during the session, providing **feedback to parents** at the end of each term and following all **health and safety guidelines**.

Before starting university, I had already developed good written and communication skills through working as a fitness instructor. This involved utilising my coaching and instructing skills as well as the need to provide constructive **feedback** to the participants. As the instructing took place in a local leisure centre, I also needed to **liaise** with other facility staff and users, which I managed to do successfully, which was a great **confidence** boost for me.

I have always worked well as part of a team and have always taken a natural **leadership** role, although I can work in any position on a team. I worked very well as part of **a team** when completing the Coaching Innovation Programme (CIP) as part of my degree. I worked with three other students to design a scheme to tackle low participation rates in girls' football within the Southampton area. For this project we worked with a targeted group of 12 girls in an inner city **secondary school**. We found it challenging to **devise engaging sessions** which were also **fun** and boosted the girls' self-esteem. I also worked within a team of six during my Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition to the Brecon Beacons. It was my time planning and preparing for this expedition, as well as during it, which enabled me to identify that I was a natural leader, compassionate, understanding and efficient at problem solving.

UK Sport's role in helping Britain's elite sportspeople to achieve at the highest level has inspired me and I would be proud to work for an organisation that supports everyone to reach their full sporting potential.

# Competency-based questions

Some application forms will have a section where they expect answers to specific questions. These are obviously important things that the employer wants, so think carefully about the answers you provide.

Many competency questions follow the format – ‘Give an example of a time when you demonstrated [such and such] skill?’ or ‘Please describe ...’

Always try to provide solid examples, including recent relevant evidence if possible.

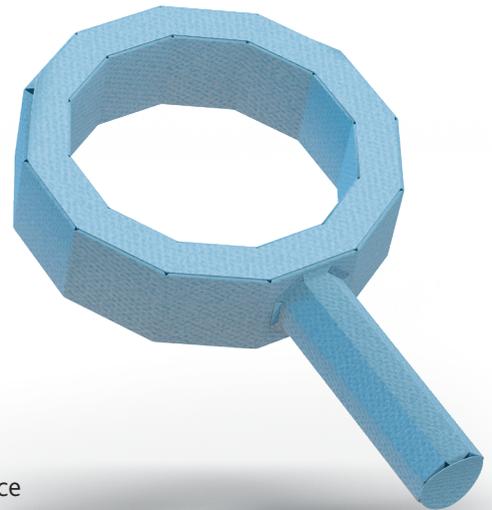
When answering competency-based questions you may find it easier to structure them using the **STAR** technique.

**Situation:** Give some context and background information.

**Task:** Briefly explain what you had to do.

**Action:** What you did and how you did it – details of the steps you took.

**Result:** The facts and figures that prove your actions made a positive difference



Here is an example using the question ‘Please describe your proudest achievement.’

“ In my role as a peer leader, I used my leadership and communication skills to support first-year students in their search for a placement.

I gave some presentations outlining resources and advice for finding a placement and arranged for each person to get a CV check. To help motivation remain high throughout the year, I organised weekly meetings to address any difficulties that students came across and also set up a Twitter account to share opportunities with everyone.

The number of students going on placement increased by 25 per cent and I was proud to be nominated by my peers for an ‘Outstanding Contribution Award’ at the University’s annual Employability Celebration.”





**Solent University**

East Park Terrace

Southampton

SO14 0YN

**Tel** +44 (0)23 8201 3000

**Email** [solent.futures@solent.ac.uk](mailto:solent.futures@solent.ac.uk)

**[solent.ac.uk](http://solent.ac.uk)**