



## MASSEY UNIVERSITY Career and Employment Service

### CV and cover letters manual

Massey University's Career and Employment Service strives to enhance the employability of Massey University's students and recent graduates by enabling them to make informed and independent career decisions and to facilitate their transitions from study to work.

Whether you are an on-campus or a distance student, and no matter what stage you are at in your career thinking, we can provide you with careers information and advice. The services that we offer include:

- Individual career advice, face-to-face on campus or by email; telephone or (via [Skype](#)) by webcam
- Support in seeking employment and in applying for work. This includes advice on how to access job vacancies; on the 'hidden' job market; on developing your CV and cover letter and on interview skills
- Access to [Massey CareerHub](#) – our on-line job and events portal
- A wide range of employer-led seminars and career expos
- Seminars and workshops on career-related issues.

For more information see **both** of the following websites:

- <http://careers.massey.ac.nz>
- <http://careerhub.massey.ac.nz> – We use this site to publicise job vacancies; information on career-related events and useful articles and links. Some events require registration to attend and this can also be done through this site.

We have a presence on each of the Massey campuses. Our contact details are as follows:

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## **An introduction to CVs**

Fundamentally, your CV will summarise your educational, work and personal history. How you present this information may depend on a number of factors. For example:

- The type of work and employer that you are seeking
- The stage that you are at in your career
- Whether you are applying for an advertised role or whether you are applying 'speculatively' for work
- The country in which you want to work/study
- Whether you are applying for employment or for further study
- If you are applying to work in academia, in university lecturing/research roles an 'academic' CV will be expected.

For work in New Zealand, it is common to use a style that profiles your skills (particularly those that are relevant to the role you seek) and combines this with chronological information (of what and where you have studied; the work experience that you have; your extracurricular activities and related factors).

Your CV should be designed to make it easy for the reader to find the most relevant facts. These facts must be easy to understand and it is important that you target each CV that you prepare. In doing so you should address any particular requirements that the employer has.

Although this workbook offers you a framework that will help you to draft a competitive, attention-grabbing CV it is crucial that you adapt these suggestions to your own circumstances and professional requirements. Some employers offer guidance on what they expect CVs submitted to them to look like. Other useful information may be offered by the professional associations that exist in the sector that you seek to enter.

Increasingly, you'll be asked to submit your CV and cover letter electronically. Should this be the case, we recommend saving and sending them as PDF files as this should ensure that any formatting that you've used remains in place. However, if you're asked to submit them as 'Word' documents our advice would be to keep your formatting simple.

Remember too, that the Career and Employment Service (CES) can help. Although we will not write your CV for you, we can assist by offering you advice; by reviewing any CV that you have and by offering information on styles of CV that meet your circumstances and requirements. The latter includes information on styles for academic roles and for work abroad.

## The purpose of a CV

As you sit down to draft your CV remember that there is no 'correct' format. However, ultimately it is a marketing tool, and its aim is to persuade the employer to interview you. It must show the employer that you have the personal qualities they require and should list key facts, including:

contact details	your education and qualifications
work history	your responsibilities and achievements
relevant skills	what you do outside of study and work

Your CV should:

- Outline how your skills; experience and knowledge relate to the role for which you are applying and will enable you to 'add value' to the organisation.
- Demonstrate your passion for the role; sector and organisation.
- Showcase your written communication skills – including your attention to detail; your accuracy in spelling and grammar; your ability to present information effectively; your skill in presenting salient facts etc

In doing the above, you'll need to consider what the reader might be looking for in your CV. Ultimately you're aiming to make their job easier for them by matching what you can offer with their expectations and requirements. After all, this is exactly what they'll be doing!

Vital too, is remembering that the key to success with your CV might lie not in what you include but in what you take out, for example, meaningless and generic words and phrases. Potential employers are much keener to read of:

- your achievements rather than your hopes
- the exact nature of your role in the experiences that you've had rather than simply the experiences themselves
- how you have accomplished things rather than just your accomplishments on their own
- responsibilities that you have chosen to take on rather than those that have been assigned to you.

## **Styles of CV**

The style that you choose for your CV may well depend upon your situation; the context in which it is being used and the background and experiences that you have. Amongst the most common styles are:

### **Skills-based**

Applicable for the majority of university students and recent graduates. It should stress relevant skills developed from a range of activities including work. Your skills and major achievements would be stressed early in your CV, often in discrete sections designed for the purpose (e.g. by using 'Relevant skills and attributes' and 'Achievements' headings).

The factual, chronological details of your work history and education and qualifications would come later.

Many of those who use this style do not have much, or any, work experience. Others have changed jobs a number of times. However, it can also be useful if the experience that you have is not directly or explicitly relevant to the role that you now seek.

Additionally, where you seek to change career direction or have a broad range of experience this could be a style to use.

### **Modern**

Here you would highlight key strengths; work experience and achievements.

Those who opt for this style may have some relevant experience. Equally, they are often keen to stress the relevant skills that they have. This style could also be useful for those with extensive experience in a role; sector and/or organisation that they now want to move away from.

Modern CVs will often note the particular achievements of the candidate.

## **Traditional**

Distance and mature students in particular will often opt for this style, as will those seeking senior positions in an organisation. It is best suited to those with extensive skills; knowledge and experience in the field for which it is being used. In outlining the above, relevant experience is often the primary focus and emphasis.

Traditional CVs can be a good way of outlining career progression and achievements.

## **Vocational**

As the name implies, those who opt for a vocational style are usually seeking to enter particular vocations. Examples would be as teachers; veterinarians; engineers; nurses and so on.

In this style of CV the emphasis would be on the applicant's relevant qualifications; experience; training and professional development. This would include practicum experience.

## **Academic**

This style is more often than not a requirement for those seeking to secure an academic or a research-based role.

The focus here will be on research skills, interests and experience; academic knowledge and attainment; publications; scholarships and awards; conference attendance; paper and poster presentations; teaching and supervision experience and successful funding applications.

This style can be longer than the 2 - 3 pages recommended for the others.

## **Chronological**

This is still the most common style and is one where you outline your career history; skills and experience in date order, normally beginning with the most recent items (reverse chronological).

It is detailed, comprehensive and biographical and may be particularly where you can directly relate your skills and experiences to those being sought for the role.

### **In the beginning...**

Commonly, CVs will show a person's contact/personal details first. Yours should include your postal address; telephone number(s) and email address (be **very** wary of 'humorous' email addresses).

For roles in New Zealand there is no need for you to include your date of birth; age; marital status; number of dependents or health status. However, include the fact that you hold New Zealand citizenship or permanent residency as applicable.

Where it is a requirement of the role, you may also need to add here the type of driver's licence you have (if any).

Then, it is a good idea to move on to the most relevant information – that is, the information that shows how you meet the requirements of the role.

### **What about a career objective?**

This is an optional section but, if included, should be placed immediately after your contact/personal details. Its purpose is to offer a **brief** outline of what you can offer the employer. When well crafted, it will use two or three sentences to highlight your relevant skills, knowledge and experience. Furthermore, this highlighting is your opportunity to show your awareness of the employer's requirements and your excellence as an applicant. Finally, it is a good idea to conclude this section with your professional goals – provided that these are relevant to the role!

### **A career summary**

Including, early in your CV, a career summary is particularly useful where you have an extensive work history. Equally, it is useful if you have chronological gaps in your background or are changing career direction.

Again, our advice would be to keep such a section to a maximum of two or three sentences. It is crucial that you keep to facts here – for example, about time taken to travel; to raise your family or about why you seek to move into the new career concerned.

### **Relevant skills and attributes**

Although this section is optional it will be crucial that readers of your CV are able to find information on your skills and attributes and to do so easily. It goes without saying that their particular interest will be on those that are relevant to the role for which you are applying. In profiling your relevant skills and attributes you'll need to begin with a clear understanding of the specific skills/qualities that potential employers are looking for.

You can gain an insight into this from any job advertisement; job description and/or person specification that you have for the role. Where you are applying 'speculatively' to an employer it will still be vital that you research the role.

For this, the 'jobs database' section of the [CareersNZ](#) organisation can be particularly useful. There you can access information on around six hundred occupations – including their 'personal requirements' – i.e. the skills; knowledge and qualities needed to be effective in the role. Additionally, accessing the 'jobs database' allows you to explore many of the roles that exist in a range of industries and interest areas.

Coupled with the above, you'll be expected to note, in brief, what you mean by each skill or quality you are claiming. It is not enough simply to list your relevant skills/qualities as the reader will want to know, for example, how you communicate and work in teams; what your research skills actually are; what you mean by interpersonal and customer service skills and so on.

Then, they'll also look for proof. You'll need to offer **evidence** of your skills/qualities using examples of where you have utilised and developed them.

It is good to draw these examples from different areas of your life – commonly your studies; your work experience and your extra-curricular activities. Remember though, that the examples you offer in your CV are often used in interview questions. Employers will typically ask you to expand on some of your examples or to think of additional ones for your skills and qualities. You can access more on this [here](#).

### **Education and qualifications**

Most graduate employers will see qualifications as a key selection criterion. They may require, or at least see as valuable, qualifications in particular disciplines. Equally, they might require or prefer applicants to have postgraduate-level qualifications. Some will ask for a record of the papers you've studied and grades you've attained – often in the form of an official academic transcript.

Thus, it is probably important for this section to appear early in your CV. However, where you have particularly relevant professional experience you may choose to highlight this before details of your education and qualifications.

It is important to bear in mind exactly what you want to tell the reader. What is it about your experience that is most relevant and are particular aspects of your education and qualifications worth highlighting over others to portray this? For example, are you keen to show the breadth of your studies; your record of academic achievement; your decision to specialise in a discipline or your commitment to developing both personally and professionally?

This section will commonly be structured to:

- Start with your most current or most recent tertiary studies. In most cases this will also be your highest level of education. Where you have yet to complete your current qualification it is a good idea to include your expected date of completion.
- Show the dates at which you started, completed or will complete each qualification. Then, the name(s) of the institution through which you studied and the full title(s) of the qualification(s). Where some of your study has been undertaken outside of New Zealand it is a good idea to note the relevant cities and countries.
- Note that you have attached/submitted an academic transcript if this has been requested or if you have chosen to do so. In other cases you may want to highlight, in this section and after the qualification concerned, any particularly relevant papers/project work undertaken and/or good grades attained.
- Include details of your secondary schooling, where this has been in the recent past.

### **Professional development**

Increasingly, university students and graduates will have attended professionally relevant seminars; conferences; training sessions and events. These may well interest potential employers and are worth highlighting in a separate section of your CV.

Where you are including such a section, it is a good idea to give the name of the event, the organisation that hosted it and the dates concerned. If you attained a qualification, state what this was and if you gave a presentation include its title and topic.

### **Employment history**

There are many ways in which you can outline your work experience in your CV.

One is to rename this section 'Work Experience'. This is often done by those who have only minimal experience of work or who have little (if any) directly relevant work experience. Should you opt for this style you can include any voluntary experience that you have together with placement and/or practicum experience.

Another option is to split this section into 'Relevant Experience' and 'Additional Experience'. A third is to group your experience into common types of work – e.g. 'Customer Service Experience'; 'IT Experience' and 'Business and Finance Experience'.

For others, their choice is to use 'Paid Employment' and 'Voluntary Work' headings.

As a checklist for this section of your CV we would suggest that you:

- Use reverse chronology and list your current or most recent job first. However, you may change this 'rule' where your current/most recent job is not directly relevant to what you seek now but your previous experience is. Should this be the case, use the most relevant first.
- Consider using the heading 'Relevant Experience' if you have had work experience (including part-time, fixed-term and/or voluntary work) that is relevant to the role for which you're applying.
- Particularly for relevant roles that you've held, include the dates (from and to); the name of the organisation and your job title. Then, outline your responsibilities and achievements – indeed, it is a good idea to use these words and to put them in bold.
- When adding dates, consider how any 'gaps' in your CV might be addressed.
- In some instances, you may need to add a sentence or two that describes the organisation that you worked for. We would advise you to do this where the organisation's name does not clearly indicate the work that it does.
- Relevant placements; practicum and project work could be outlined under a separate heading. Where you have little relevant experience except for this it may be a good idea to place the former before the latter in your CV.
- Where you choose to use a 'Relevant Experience' heading you could follow this section with one headed 'Additional Experience'. For the latter there is no need to offer as much detail on each role.

### **What about voluntary work?**

Never underestimate the value of voluntary work. Rather, stress to the reader that the fact that you undertook voluntary work evidences your motivation and your engagement with the community.

Some people choose to detail this type of work under a separate heading, others to incorporate it into the information on their work experience overall. Either way, it is good to offer brief details of:

- Your particular responsibilities and achievements – ideally, you'll be able to link these to the requirements of the role for which you are applying
- Projects that you worked on

- The nature of the organisation(s)

### **Professional memberships and associations**

Many professions and employment sectors operate professional associations. Some offer membership to individuals, often at different levels and charges depending upon whether you are a student; in work and so on.

Membership may be a requirement to work in certain professions. In other cases membership is optional and may simply require that you have studied or are studying a relevant discipline or that you have an interest in the profession/sector.

Needless to say, one of the things to check are the benefits of membership. In some cases this may include access to job vacancies. Equally, membership may entitle you to attend events – a good way of building a network of relevant contacts.

Overall, membership is one way of evidencing your commitment to a profession and sector. On your CV, note the following:

- Any current and relevant memberships that you hold, with details of your level of membership. Where you have been a member for some time you may want to note this too.
- Active membership is often particularly attractive to potential employers. Where you are an active member outline in brief any roles that you've held and work that you've undertaken.

For more information on some of the professional associations that exist in New Zealand see:

- [Index NZ – Professional associations](#)
- [NZS.com – Unions and Professional Bodies](#)

### **Scholarships, awards and prizes**

A section such as this can be used to profile educational and/or professional acknowledgements. Our advice would be to outline these by giving the title and brief information on it was awarded for (e.g. academic attainment).

Of particular interest to potential employers will be any scholarships; awards or prizes that you've had that have direct relevance to the role they're offering. One way of highlighting this relevance is to outline any skills that the award was in recognition of.

### **Interests and activities**

Although this section is optional, many people choose to include it – particularly those who have a range of interests that they actively pursue.

For many employers, choosing employees who can maintain a good work-life balance is important. Additionally, they will be keen to see your relevant skills and the interests that you have may be a means through which you are developing these.

As with your CV as a whole, think carefully about what your interests and activities might imply about you. For example, if they are all solitary could this imply that you prefer to be on your own or that your interpersonal skills may be lacking? Conversely, it is possible that an interviewer may share your interests and this can make the interview a more relaxed experience for both parties.

When deciding whether or not to include this section, you may want to explore the organisation's web site. Many employer sites profile at least some of their staff and those that do will sometimes offer information on what the employees profiled do in their free time. Other organisations place emphasis on opportunities for staff to engage with their communities – and as such they may welcome applicants that are already actively engaged.

## **Referees**

In New Zealand, in common with many countries, CVs would typically end with a 'Referees' section. Some employers will ask that this contain the full contact details for two or three referees and may stipulate the type of referees that they seek (e.g. current or most recent employer; tutor and so on). Others will leave it to you to decide who to include.

Our advice for this section is:

- Where you have scope to choose who you will use, try to select referees who will advocate well for you and who are good communicators.
- Ideally, include an employer (your current or most recent one if possible) and a lecturer or tutor from Massey. Where applicable you could also include any work experience supervisor that you have had.
- It is likely that the most valued referees will be those who can vouch for your skills – particularly those that are particularly relevant. However, potential employers may also explore with your referees your character; your personality; your interest in the role for which you are applying; the length of time they have known you for and related factors.
- Rather than advice we would say that **it is a rule** that you get your referees' permission to use them. It is also helpful to provide them with a copy of each CV; cover letter and application form that you submit together with any details that you have of the job concerned

As an alternative, you may decide to include the sentence 'Details available on request' in this section. Doing so may allow you to keep track of contacts and this technique is often used by applicants who do not want a current employer to know yet that they are applying elsewhere.

That being said, giving full referee details will make the job easier for your potential employer. Additionally, many employers do not contact referees until the later or final stages of selection and will then ask for your permission to make this contact. Indeed you can ask that the employer does not contact your referees until then.

Finally, where you already have written testimonials our advice would be to say that these are available on request. Additionally, they should not replace the contact details of your referees, even where they have been written by the people concerned.

## In conclusion – Top Ten CV Tips

- Consistency is crucial. Be consistent in the font and formatting that you use and ensure that your layout makes your CV easy to read and to find relevant information in.
- Check for typing mistakes and for spelling and grammatical errors. Proofread your CV and ask someone else to do so too.
- Tailor each CV to reflect the requirements of the role and organisation. You'll need to stress your **relevant** skills, knowledge and experience and you'll need to show evidence of your skills and qualities.
- Showcase any responsibilities that you've had (or have) and achievements you've attained.
- Keep it brief - in New Zealand most recent graduate's CVs would be two pages (A4 sized) in length.
- There is no need to include date of birth; marital status; number of dependants; salary information or expectation or reasons for leaving previous employment. Nor do you need to note the names of your manager(s) in your work experience section.
- Avoid 'humorous' email addresses or voice mail messages on the telephone or cell phones that you're giving details of.
- Remember that CV conventions will vary from country to country. If you are applying for work outside New Zealand the Career and Employment Service staff can normally advise on the style that is the norm in the countries of interest to you.
- Every CV that you submit should be accompanied by a cover letter that is also tailored to the role and organisation.
- There is a vast range of CV templates and CV building tools available on the web. However, it has to be a personal document that is unique to you. It is also a 'marketing' tool and it is **you** that it is marketing. Think carefully about what it might say about you, about the message that you're trying to convey in it and about how well it shows how you can 'add value' to the employer.

## CV Checklist

As you draft your CV, completing this checklist will enable you to stay on track; to review what you've done; to identify areas for improvement and to ensure that you are addressing all the necessary factors.

Ask yourself the following:

Is my CV concise – around two pages in length	Yes/No	Is it easy and inviting to read?	Yes/No
Is my spelling and grammar accurate?	Yes/No	Have I placed sufficient emphasis on the main points?	Yes/No
Is the information in it easy to find?	Yes/No	Am I highlighting the skills and experience needed for the role?	Yes/No
Do I provide an example for each skill that I say that I have?	Yes/No	Am I using action words in describing my skills and experience?	Yes/No
Am I consistent in my use of styles including fonts; bullet-points; headings	Yes/No	Has my CV been reviewed by the <a href="#">Career and Employment Service</a> ?	Yes/No

### Providing evidence of the required skills

The employer will be assessing your CV against the skills and competencies required in the role. Here we offer a list of some of the commonly sought skills and competencies.

We recommend that you work your way through this list, recording examples which you could use to demonstrate that you have the skills concerned. Whilst you may only have room in your CV for one example for each skill, try to think of more than one example for each. In an interview, employers often ask for additional examples to the ones used in your CV.

Skill or quality	Examples of evidence	Evidence you could use
Interpersonal		
Verbal communication		
Written communication		
Flexible, can-do attitude		
Self motivation		

Skill or quality	Examples of evidence	Evidence you could use
Teamwork		
Energy and enthusiasm		
Problem solving		
Analytical and conceptual		
Decision making		
Planning and organising		

Skill or quality	Examples of evidence	Evidence you could use
Initiative		
Leadership		
Commercial awareness		
Persuading		
Motivating others		
Negotiation		

**It is a good idea to add to this table, or to create a new one, and add any additional skills sought for the roles for which you are applying.**

## Examples of skills developed through different experiences

- **Tertiary study:** Could involve essay and report-writing; giving presentations; project work; examinations; conducting experiments; research and managing your time. Skills and qualities developed could include: communication; evaluation; research; planning and organising; analytical; IT; negotiation; team work; working independently and self-motivation.
- **Retail work experience:** Could involve customer service; sales; dealing with queries and complaints; shift work; cash handling and replenishing stock. Skills and qualities developed could include: resilience; sales; meeting targets; customer service; administrative; giving and extracting information; answering queries; approachability; diplomacy; cross cultural awareness and sensitivity and professionalism.
- **Coach of sports team:** Could involve helping the team to learn the skills and rule; advising players; organising and leading practice sessions; developing training programmes selecting and encouraging players and looking after equipment. Skills and qualities developed could include: coaching and teaching; interpersonal; leadership; communication including questioning, instructing, and giving feedback; planning; management and organisational.
- **Residential Adviser:** Could involve assisting students with any difficulties they encounter and to settle into their time at Massey; advice and information giving; referral to other appropriate sources of help; dealing with discipline issues; organising and participating in events and acting as role models. Skills and qualities developed could include: tact and diplomacy; maturity; self-discipline; advice giving; record keeping; appropriate referral; knowledge of relevant policies and procedures; awareness of health and safety and resilience.

In many instances, potential employers will clearly outline the skills and qualities that they seek in applicants. These will be shown in the job advertisement. Where a job description and/or person specification is also offered or provided you **must** use this too as this will offer more detail on these requirements.

However, you may be applying 'speculatively' to an organisation without knowing whether or not it has vacancies relevant to you. In this instance it will still be crucial to show that you have researched the type of work that you're keen to secure, and that you're aware of the skills and qualities required for this work. To help with this see the 'Jobs database' section of the [CareersNZ](#) organisation's web site

## Cover letters

Employers will expect you to include a cover letter with your CV and it is usually this letter that they will read first. As a result, you'll need to ensure that yours will capture their attention and will make them want to read your CV. This will mean that you will have to spend time and effort on each cover letter you develop.

In most instances, a cover letter will be no more than one page in length. It will begin by stating what you are applying for and where you saw the role advertised. Where you are applying 'speculatively' you should still note the type of work that you are seeking – i.e. the nature of the work and whether it is full-time; vacation/short-term; a practicum etc.

Then, it should offer a brief outline on why you are interested in the position. In drafting this you can stress that your interest lies, in part, in the fact that you believe that you have the skills; knowledge and experience sought. This you should then outline to show that you are a good 'match' to their requirements.

It is also important that you show interest in working for the organisation concerned. You are unlikely to be interviewed unless you show in your letter that you have researched the organisation and can articulate what it is about them that appeals to you as a potential employer. In doing this don't simply tell them something that they know already. Instead, choose a small number of factors and say why those factors appeal. Is it, for example, their commitment to operating ethically? Alternatively, is it their environmental record; the fact that they operate sustainably or their engagement with the community? Is it their reputation for training and developing staff that appeals and if so, why?

Increasingly, employers will profile their values through their websites and some will have a 'why work for us' section. At the very least these are sections that you should access before drafting your cover letter. Furthermore, keep researching any organisation to which you apply as a common interview question is 'what do you know about us?'

To conclude your cover letter it is a good idea to indicate the action that you'd like the reader to take. For example, you could say that you'd welcome the opportunity to expand upon your application at interview. Equally, you might want to say that you would be grateful for the opportunity to discuss further how you could apply your relevant skills; knowledge and experience to the benefit of the organisation.

Where your letter has begun with 'Dear Sir/Madam' sign off at the end with 'Yours sincerely'. Conversely, where it is being sent to a named person sign off with 'Yours faithfully'.

When you are submitting your CV and cover letter as attachments to an email, keep the latter brief and professional. Your email message should outline why you are emailing them and should state the nature of the documents that you've attached. Needless to say, it should also state the role for which you are applying!

## Cover Letter Tips

- As with your CV, pay close attention to typing; spelling and grammar errors. Proofread your letter and ask someone else to do so too.
- Make sure that it is easy to read! Have you used paragraphs and margins appropriately? Is the font and font size adequate? We'd also recommend that you use single spacing between lines, double between paragraphs.
- Where the employer has given you guidance on how to apply, ensure that you follow this and that your letter is professional and business-like.
- Ensure that you've made it clear how potential employers can contact you. If you'd prefer that they called you, remember that any voicemail message that you have on the telephone(s) concerned are professional.
- Date your letter; double check that you are sending it to the organisation named in it and ensure that you've made it clear what you are applying for.
- Crucially, refer to the relevant skills that you have and provide evidence of these. You may want to tell the reader that more detail can be found in your CV. Any job advertisement; job description or person specification that you have for the role in question is likely to have key words in it that you should use for this section of your cover letter.
- Show, in brief, why you are keen to work for this organisation. This is an opportunity for you to show that you've researched them.
- Sign your letter and double check that you are sending it with any other documents to which you refer – e.g. your CV; academic transcript and so on.

## Cover letters – an example of layout and content

Insert your address here

*(2 spaces)*

Insert date here

*(2 spaces)*

Insert the potential employers address here

*(2 Spaces)*

Dear

*(1 space)*

**Re: Position title and reference (if applicable)**

*(1 space)*

### **Details of the Job**

State the job for which you are applying and indicate the source and date of the job advertisement. Provide details of any contact that you have had with the organisation. Where you have been referred by them by a friend or colleague of the employer give details (having ensured first that this contact is happy for you to do so). Stress your interest in the role and show your enthusiasm for this and for the organisation.

*(1 space)*

### **What do you have that you can offer to the role and organisation?**

Highlight the extent to which you match the requirements of the job e.g. **relevant** qualifications, training, experience, qualities, capabilities and transferable skills. Outline any further points in your favour related to the role and refer the reader to your attached C.V. vitae. Again, show your enthusiasm! Relate what you are saying here back to any job advertisement; job description and/or person specification that you have for the role concerned or to information gleaned from the organisation's web site. Remember to include **evidence** of your relevant competencies.

*(1 space)*

### **Why do you want to work in this position for this organisation?**

Emphasise your interest in the particular organisation. Make realistically positive comments and show clearly what it is about working for them that appeals to you. They will expect a letter that is tailored to them and that shows the research that you've done into them.

*(1 space)*

## **Next steps**

Thank them for considering your application and indicate that you hope to hear from them in the near future. You may want to say that you'd welcome the opportunity to expand on your application at an interview. Equally, you could say that you would greatly appreciate the chance to discuss further how your relevant abilities might benefit the organisation.

Finally, indicate that you are available to be contacted at any time to discuss your application further. It is a good idea to add your most direct contact details – this is likely to be a cell or landline telephone number.

*(2 spaces)*

Yours sincerely/faithfully (as appropriate)

*(4 spaces)*

(Signature here)

*(2 spaces)*

(Your name here)

## Sample Chronological CV – No. 1

**This is an example. Names, numbers, addresses, emails and all other details are fictitious.**

### **Nicola Baker**

23 University Avenue, Telephone: 09 999 9999  
Three Kings Email: bakerstreet@gmail.com  
Auckland

#### PERSONAL PROFILE

Energetic recent graduate with excellent research, analysis and communication skills, looking for an opportunity to work in marketing or a related role.

#### EDUCATION

2008 – 2011 Massey University Bachelor of Communication  
(Marketing Communication)

#### Key papers included:

Introduction to Business Communication Marketing Management  
Marketing Strategy Integrated Marketing Communication

In this degree I was able to develop a broad range of transferable skills. These included skills in analysis; qualitative research; written and oral communication and team work. For a university project on the topic of measurable marketing, I was required to analyse and interpret information from a wide range of sources including the internet, libraries and relevant professional journals and to utilise skills in survey design and methodologies.

2003–2008 Parnell School for Girls NCEA Levels 1 - 3  
Parnell, Auckland Level 3 - Excellence

#### WORK EXPERIENCE

2010 - 11 Marketing Assistant Auckland Council

This was a summer vacation job in which I worked in a team established to research customer responses to proposals for library enhancements.

Skills I developed in this role included: Analytical; Organisational; Teamwork; Planning and time management; Research and Administrative.

2009 – 2010	Data Entry and Administration	North Shore City Council Planning Department
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In this summer vacation role I was responsible for filing planning applications; photocopying information and entering data into computer systems. Furthermore, I had to collect and maintain all business documentation.

The skills I developed included attention to detail; use of the Microsoft Office suite; the ability to work well under pressure; data management and maintenance abilities; working collaboratively and flexibility.

2008 – Present	Call handler	Youthline
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I work in some evenings and at weekends as a volunteer. As a Call Handler I am there for callers and I aim to empower them through challenging times. Skills that I have developed and use include sensitive confrontation and active listening and the ability to effectively connect and interact with a diverse range of people.

As a result of a suggestion that I made to my Manager the organisation adopted a new system which has resulted in increased calls being taken.

## INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Soccer: Vice Captain of the University Women's Soccer Team. I organise venues and fixtures for three teams; playing in the First XI and choose players for each game.
- Painting and reading

## ADDITIONAL SKILLS

- IT: Extensive knowledge of Microsoft Office packages developed through my university studies and through my job in the North Shore City Council Planning department. I also have skills in a range of spreadsheets and databases packages.
- Languages: Good written and spoken Spanish (my Mother is Columbian)

## REFEREES

### **Professional**

Ms. Karilyn Rees  
Marketing Manager  
Auckland Council  
Private Bag 92300  
Auckland 1142

Tel: 09 123 45678

Email: [krees@akl.govt.nz](mailto:krees@akl.govt.nz)

### **University**

Professor Simon Says  
College of Business  
Massey University  
Private Bag 11 222  
Auckland 1141

Tel: 09 414 0800 ext 1234

Email: [S.A.Says@massey.ac.nz](mailto:S.A.Says@massey.ac.nz)

## Sample skills-based CV No. 1

**This is an example. Names, numbers, addresses, emails and all other details are fictitious.**

Alex Ross  
23 Albany Avenue, Palmerston North  
06 356 9099  
[alex@emailaddress.co.nz](mailto:alex@emailaddress.co.nz)

### Personal profile

Final year Bachelor of Business Studies degree student, majoring in Finance, with strong interpersonal skills and extensive relevant vacation and part-time work experience now seeking an entry-level graduate position within the financial sector.

### Relevant skills and attributes

#### Finance sector knowledge –

- This includes an understanding of financial and investment markets; financial planning, taxation, investments, mortgages and insurance.
- Good literacy and numeracy abilities.
- The ability to research up-to-date market and financial information.
- These skills have been developed through my degree studies and my work in banking.

#### Communication and interpersonal

- Interpersonal skills developed to a high standard while working in customer service roles part-time and in vacations throughout my tertiary studies.
- Strong ability to form and maintain positive relationships with people from all backgrounds.
- Written communication skills developed through university assignments
- Presentations made throughout my degree course.
- Demonstrated an ability to remain calm under pressure whilst working with customers and dealing with any complaints that they had.

#### Analytical and research

- Conducted research into the credit card spending of New Zealanders as part of a university project.
- Keep daily, detailed and accurate records of my contact with customers and potential customers in my work with ANZ Bank.

## Teamwork

- Learnt how to listen to other members of the team and provide peer support when working as a Bank Officer.
- Developed my team leadership skills in my Martial Arts coaching role through participating in; coaching and leading group-based activities.
- Selected by my peers for the team leader role on a research project during my degree. Here I was required to allocate responsibilities to the team members and we attained an overall A - grade for the project.

## Planning, organisation and time management

- Highly effective planning and organisational skills have been essential while studying full time, working part time and maintaining active extra-curricular activities.
- Working at ANZ Bank requires me to have excellent organisational skills as I manage large numbers of client files at any one time.

## Education and qualifications

2008 - 2011	Massey University Palmerston North	Bachelor of Business Studies Majoring in Finance
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**Relevant papers taken include:** Fundamentals of Finance; Introduction to Investments; Business Finance; Economics and Economic Analysis of Money, Banking and Financial Markets.

2001 - 2006	St. Paul's College Wellington	NCEA Levels 1 – 3
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## Training

2009 - 2011 Extensive customer service & product knowledge in-house training, ANZ Bank

## Work Experience

2008 – To date	ANZ Bank Call Centre Palmerston North	Customer Services Officer
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**Responsibilities:** I have worked in this role on a part-time basis since starting university. In addition, I work there full-time in university vacations. My responsibilities include:

- The sale of bank products and services
- Dealing with customer enquiries by telephone and on-line
- Promoting bank lending and term deposit services.

2006 – 2008

ANZ Bank  
Taranaki Street  
Wellington

Bank Officer

**Responsibilities:** This was a job I secured on leaving College. In it I was responsible for:

- Bank teller and office administration duties
- Selling bank products and services
- Working within a team to manage workloads

### **Interests and activities**

- Snowboarding - A keen snowboarder, I try to visit a winter destination at least once a year
- Martial Arts – I teach a range of martial arts to groups of children in a youth group every week
- Running – I regular run half marathons and am an active member of Massey’s University’s ‘Striders’ running club.

### **Referees**

#### **Work:**

Ms. Trish McCaw  
Team Leader  
ANZ Bank Call Centre  
Private Bag 11 222  
Palmerston North 4440

#### **Academic:**

Dr. Brian Carter  
Senior Lecturer  
Department of Finance  
Massey University  
Private Bag 11 333  
Palmerston North 4430

## Into the future – the CV on-line

Make no mistake there is an increasing expectation amongst employers that applicants for (at least) professional roles will have a presence on relevant networking sites such as [Linkedin](#).

At its most basic, your [Linkedin](#) profile (or the profile that you create on a similar site) may simply be a dynamic version of your CV. In it you'll have the option of creating live links to – for example – the sites of organisations that you've worked for; institutions you've studied through and bodies that you are a member of.

Additionally however, you may choose to link to paper and multi-media based examples of work that you've done and to details of some of the people who are in your professional network. The importance of the latter cannot be over emphasised. Potential employers increasingly expect applicants to have highly developed interpersonal skills and the ability to network effectively – if not to have extensive professional networks already.

As with your CV it is vital that you keep your on-line profile professional and current. Note too the importance of optimising the latter for search engines. You may be surprised at the number of employers who will search job applicants' names on-line, and who expect the same applicants to be searching for the employer's on-line presence.

When you write or review your profile try to do so with a prospective employer in mind – would you hire yourself from what it says? Does it show what you can do; what you can offer and the value you could add to an organisation and role? Is it clear and explicit in detailing your primary interests?

The chances are many who read your profile will be thinking – how could I use this person in my business? Will (s)he fit in well? As a result, put some thought into what you can do to be useful to potential employers. This HAS to come before you ask or apply for a job.

## Notes