

HOW TO WRITE YOUR CV?

If you are writing a CV for the first time it can be confusing and overwhelming. Don't worry...you are not alone. PRRT have experienced Career and Personal Development Coaches on hand to help you write your skills, knowledge and experience gained from policing into a well presented CV.

On average a potential employer will only spend between 20-30 seconds reviewing a CV, so you must make sure it is clearly formatted, concise and to the point.

Here is a brief guide to help point you in the right direction with writing your CV:

What is a CV?

CV stands for curriculum vitae, which is Latin for 'a brief summary of your career'. It's about selling your skills, experience and qualification, and showing them you're the right person for the job.

Why do you use a CV?

To demonstrate that you have the skills, knowledge and qualifications for the job position and/or that the employer is looking for.

How long should a CV be?

A standard CV should ideally be no longer than two sides of A4 page.

What should I include in my CV?

Contact Details - It may sound obvious, but you'd be surprised how many people forget to include their name, email address and contact phone number. There is no need to include your home address, as employers rarely post out correspondence via letter.

Personal Profile – This is the first thing an employer reads, and is an essential part of standing out from the crowd. It is targeted to the job you are applying for and provides an introduction to who you are, what you are offering, and what you're looking for. It also should be written in the third person, for example, "A dedicated and reliable individual with 30 years' experience providing a professional service to the public."

Work Experience - This section should include all of your relevant work experience, listed with the most recent first. Include your

job title, the name of the organisation, dates from and to, and your key responsibilities.

Education – Begin by listing the most recent educational qualifications, as employers are more interested in what you done more recently. Include names of qualifications, dates and grades achieved if relevant. If educational qualifications are not your strong point, and you have more work experience, then place more of an emphasis on your work experience.

Achievements - This is your chance to show how your previous experience has given you the skills needed to make you a suitable candidate. List all of your relevant skills and achievements (backing them up with examples, facts and figures).

Personal Interests – Including your hobbies and interested in your CV is optional. However you may wish to mention relevant ones could back up your skills and help you to stand out from the crowd – not to mention give you something to talk about at an interview.

References – simply stating on your CV that your 'references are available upon request' is satisfactory. Employers generally collect references at the last stage of recruitment process, once shortlisting and interviews are carried out.

What should I not include in my CV?

- 'Curriculum Vitae' is an unnecessary title – your name as a title will suffice as it is your career summary.
- Date of birth / Martial status
- It is not advised to include a photograph, unless you are targeting jobs in acting or modelling. Although saying this, some security opportunities in Close Protection have previously asked for a photograph to be attached.

Do I need to explain gaps in my CV?

- You must always inform a potential employer of any gaps in employment within your CV to avoid it being misinterpreted.

What is a Covering Letter? Do I need one?

- You should always include a covering letter, unless the employer states otherwise.



It will enable you to personalise and target your application to the job. You can also draw attention to a particular part of your CV, disclose a disability or clarify gaps in your work history.

How do I write a great CV?

- Spelling/Grammar - There should be no spelling or grammar mistakes in your CV. Use a spell checker and enlist a second pair of eyes to proof read your CV.
- Presentation - Use a simple, easy to read font, size 10-12. Bullet points should be used to condense large paragraphs of text.
- Action words - Include as many active words as possible to increase the impact of your CV. For example, you could include targeted words like 'created', 'analysed'; and 'devised' to present yourself as a person that shows initiative.
- Target to the job - Try to include the most relevant skills, experience and qualifications to the job you are applying for. Read the job advert in detail to find out more about what the employer is looking for.

GET HELP WITH YOUR CV

To arrange a discussion with a Career and Personal Development Coach about your skills and experience from policing and further advice and guidance on how to write a CV, contact the Personal Development and Training Administration team on 028 9042 7788 or email the service on servicesadmin@prrt.org

PRRT is based at Maryfield, Holywood and provides psychology, physiotherapy, personal development and training to the retired police population. PSNI employees can access our healthcare services via referrals from PSNI occupational health. Serving officers can access personal development and training directly. For further information or to make an appointment please call 028 9042 7788 or email: servicesadmin@prrt.org.



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