

CVs and Covering Letters in Brief

THE CV

The reverse Chronological CV is suitable for most situations. It lists education and work experience in reverse date order (most recent first). Evidence of skills and achievements are built into the CV against the relevant experience.

Format and Structure

- Most UK CVs should be two A4 sized pages, unless otherwise stated by the employer.
- Your best selling points should always come first within a section.
- Allocate space according to importance to the job for which you are applying – expand on areas of relevance.
- You can draw the recruiter's attention to relevant experience by grouping it together under an appropriate sub-heading eg Legal Work Experience, Financial Work Experience, Scientific Work Experience, Technical Work Experience or Relevant Work Experience.
- Use headings which best describe the content of the section. Adapt the headings to fit your needs eg Awards and Achievements, Positions of Responsibility and Achievements.
- Putting lines between sections and the use of boxes or tables with lined borders can clutter up your CV making it difficult to read. Tables without borders can be useful for formatting neatly in columns.
- Use a standard font that is easy to read and looks professional. Use the same font style throughout.

Style

- Keep sentences short and precise.
- Bullet points can look effective and help you to write short, dynamic sentences. If you want to use paragraphs keep them short.

Content

- Must be tailored to the requirements of the reader. What skills and experience are they looking for?
- Spelling and grammar are very important; do not rely on spell checks.
- Personal profiles are optional; they are best suited to speculative applications or in circumstances where you are not using a cover letter.
- All skills claims must be backed up by evidence.

Structuring your examples - the CAR Model

Context – What was the situation – keep it brief, but specific.

Action – What did YOU do? What was your role? What actions did you take? Use action words.

Result – What was the outcome? What did you achieve? What was improved? Qualify and quantify.

References

Unless otherwise stated, provide names of two referees. These will depend on the role, your circumstances and what has been requested. More on references:

www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/students/applicationsinterviews/af/references

THE COVERING LETTER

When sending a CV, you need to include a covering letter. The covering letter is your personal sales pitch, where you introduce yourself as a candidate and discuss why you want the job. It should be professional and business like in style and layout. In brief it should cover:

1. Why you are applying to this company? - What makes them stand out from other similar companies?
2. Why you are applying for this role? - Your motivation for applying, show your understanding of the role.
3. The skills and experience you have that match the job description.

Covering letters should be tailored for each job. If you cut and paste the company name and use the letter for any other employer, your letter will not convince the reader that you want to work for them. Even the least experienced recruiter can spot a 'mailshot' at a glance!

Summer Placements in Analytical Chemistry

We have opportunities for summer placements in Analytical Chemistry at our sites in the UK, France, Germany or Spain.

Duration 8 – 12 week placement commencing in July.

Analytical Chemistry

Analytical Chemistry uses a wide variety of techniques for the qualitative and quantitative analysis of samples submitted by other sections of the Research Laboratories and the manufacturing and marketing divisions of the company. Many of the techniques use state of the art, computer controlled instrumentation. Students will gain experience in some of the techniques used within the department and will also gain skills in manipulation of data and methods of ensuring its accuracy and reliability.

What we are looking for:

Emphasis is on good practical skills, careful recording and reporting and the ability to interact and communicate effectively with co-workers. Good interpersonal skills, the ability to work well in a team and use of initiative will be sought in applicants. Suitable candidates will preferably be undertaking a degree and have good marks at university. Good practical skills in appropriate areas of chemistry are essential.

Some knowledge of computers would be helpful for Analytical Chemistry placements. A reasonable proficiency in an appropriate foreign language is desirable (but not essential) for placements based outside the UK.

What will happen and when?

Applications will be open until 27th April so please don't expect to hear from us until that date. We'll then hold a short interview from which we'll select candidates who we think would benefit from the experiences we have on offer.

Payment and Terms These details will be discussed further at interview and are to be confirmed.

How to apply

You should submit a CV addressed to Human Resources by 3pm on xxxx. Your application should include evidence of how you meet the criteria we are looking for.

Chris Wilson

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xxxx.xxxx@student.manchester.ac.uk

tel: 0123 456 7891; LinkedIn: LinkedIn.com/xxxxx

Education

2012 - 2016

MChem (Hons) Chemistry

The University of Manchester

Current average: 67%

- Course modules covered the full range of physical, organic and inorganic chemistry, including thermodynamics, chemical kinetics and radiochemistry.
- Regularly worked in small groups to plan, carry out and conduct over 20 laboratory experiments. These covered a wide range of areas requiring precision, when recording and reporting, as well as strict time management and substantial independent research.
- Completed two data handling modules and have good practical experience in using specialist software to capture and analyse numerical data.
- Competent in the use of UV-Vis, IR and NMR spectroscopies, TLC, flash chromatography, and other standard techniques. Experienced in both organic and inorganic synthetic chemistry, including the handling of air/moisture-sensitive compounds. Excellent laboratory safety awareness and experience of completing relevant documentation.
- BSc group project involved using NMR and UV absorption spectroscopies for the study of mismatched DNA. Good teamwork helped to attain the highest mark in the year (86%) for project presentation made to panel of lecturers and industry professionals.

2005 - 2012

Park Royal High School, Collingley

A Levels

Chemistry (A), Physics (A), Maths (B)

GCSEs

10 A* - B including Maths and English

Work Experience

July 2014 - Sept 2014

Risk Assessment Intern

**Sept 2014
Kovax Chemicals, Manchester**

- Primary responsibility was to produce COSHH assessments for all of the products on site. Involved liaising with colleagues about the substances they work with and writing up the relevant assessments in a clear and succinct manner.
- Introduced to basic analytical techniques through supporting the process technologist with conducting new product trials in the manufacturing plant.
- Experienced how the team dealt with various environmental issues such as occupational exposure limits, land pollution concerns and evaluating suppliers' credentials based on their environmental impact.

**July 2012- Present
(vacation work)**

**Team Leader
McBurgers, Collingley**

- Promoted to Team Leader within twelve months. Responsible for ensuring all aspects of a shift runs smoothly.
- Received an award for excellent customer service following a mystery shopper visit.
- Successfully trained staff to be multi-skilled and fully flexible. At request of the manager, briefed other Team Leaders on new training methods and saw them implemented across all shifts.
- Used initiative to introduce a new “handover” system, ensuring excellent communication between all team members.

Volunteer Work

June 2014 – Present

**Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)
Ambassador
Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester**

- Act as an ambassador for Science, visiting local schools to offer inspiration and raising aspirations of school children to study Science and attend University.
- Deliver interactive workshops to groups of up to 20 students using chemistry concepts in a creative and engaging way.

Sept 2013 – Present

**Homeless Project Support
Shelter, Manchester**

- Regularly volunteer at weekends to support meal-run visits through the night and organise fundraising activities.
- Developed my ability to build rapport with individuals and work in groups during difficult situations.

Additional Skills

- Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office, plus intermediate experience in devising Access databases and programming macros.
- Clean driving licence.

Interests and Activities

- Active member of the Royal Society of Chemistry and the University of Manchester’s Chemistry Society (ChemSoc) attending presentations from guest speakers and co-ordinating social events e.g. organised the 2015 Chemistry Easter Bunny Ball and increased student attendance by 40% on previous year.
- Football - member of University 1st XI. Taken the responsibility for organising weekly fixtures, liaising with other Universities, arranging venues, transport and ensuring all players are aware of arrangements.

References available on request