

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!

School of Earth, Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences: MEarthSci Geology
SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION & CV for the position of Graduate Placement - Oil & Gas

JOB DESCRIPTION

We are a world-leading oil and gas consultancy. For 50 years we have been producing innovative and integrated products to support new ventures, exploration, appraisal, development and production activities worldwide.

POSITION

We are one of the most established Oil and Gas Consultancies in the world. We employ over 270 staff, providing a stimulating work environment with potential for international travel and a wealth of lifestyle and leisure opportunities. We would like to offer recent graduates the opportunity to apply for a position on our Graduate Recruitment Programme.

The programme will run for three weeks at our Headquarters and during this period, graduates will be involved in a training workshop appraising acreage for prospective plays. The workshop will include a field trip to look at outcrops in regions that relate to the subsurface offshore. Various topics will be covered throughout the 3-week period, and, should the candidate demonstrate the correct mix of skills, enthusiasm, and determination to succeed, the process will lead to full time employment with us. Our maximum intake is between 12 and 16 graduates.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS

We have specifically targeted this scheme at those who have completed a graduate programme at BSc, MSc or PhD level in Geology or Geophysics but we are particularly interested in those with skills in Seismic Interpretation, Sedimentology, Basin Analysis and Basin Modelling. We provide the full range of Geoscience, Petroleum Economics and Reservoir Engineering skills to the oil and gas industry and is increasingly involved in unconventional energy resources and CO2 sequestration. If you have qualifications in any of these disciplines we are interested in hearing from you, regardless of your degree level.

WHAT WE OFFER

If you are selected, you will be formally offered a place on the course and would request that you inform us of your acceptance or otherwise by return to secure that place. At the end of the programme, you will be given a certificate which can be placed in your Continuous Professional Development file and full feedback on your performance will be given in a one-to-one meeting at the end of the programme.

You need to submit a CV and covering letter to the HR Department detailing why you should be considered for a place on our Graduate Recruitment Programme.

Sam Willis

Crawford House, Booth Street East, Manchester M13 9QS

Tel: 0161 123 4567

Mobile: 0123 456 7891

email: xxxx.xxxx@student.manchester.ac.uk

LinkedIn.com/xxxxx

Education

2009 – 2013 **The University of Manchester** **MEarthSci (Hons) Geology, expected 2:1 (2nd year: 63%, 3rd Year: 67%)**

Gained a strong understanding of global tectonic processes and their effect on the evolution of sedimentary basins.

Relevant modules: Sedimentology, Sedimentology and Stratigraphy, Global Tectonics, Geophysical Techniques, Engineering Geology, Structural Geology, Mineral Deposits, Igneous Petrology and Metamorphic Petrology.

Independent mapping project: Conducted 30 days of independent geological fieldwork in the Esla Nappe region of Northern Spain, using field maps, sections and observations to produce a detailed geological map and an accompanying 10,000 word report. Demonstrated the ability to organise my work effectively and stay focused in a challenging working environment. Achieved a mark of 70%.

Fourth year project: The role of carbon in frictional sliding in carbonaceous mudstones. The project involved running a suite of shear experiments on synthetic muds with different carbon concentrations. It was found that the coefficient of friction dropped dramatically with only a small increase in carbon concentration. This work is being written up with my supervisor for publication in a scientific journal.

2002 – 2009 **Cheadle Hulme High School, Stockport**

- 3 A levels: Chemistry (A), Geography (B), Mathematics (C)
- 2 AS level: Mathematics (B), Spanish (B)
- 10 GCSEs (5A, 3B, 2C) including Mathematics (A) and English (A)

Relevant Work Experience

Summer 2012 **Subsurface Placement Student, Centrica, Aberdeen**

- Practically applied the technical knowledge from my degree to a live exploration project to assess the feasibility of an area off the Shetland Isles.
- Worked closely with a team of geologists, analysts and engineers, and gained a good understanding of upstream operations.
- Trained in and used 3D mapping and seismic interpretation software to analyse and present data for use by the project team.
- Commended by my supervisor for identifying a data anomaly which would have impacted significantly on the progress of the project.

Technical Skills

- Laboratory** Familiar with a range of instruments e.g. to test the mechanical properties of rocks and soils. Experience using petrological microscopes.
- Fieldwork** Experience in geophysical data collection including magnetic, gravity and seismic data. Achieved an average of 72% for field coursework and 67% for lab work.
- IT** Familiar with adobe illustrator to produce professional quality maps. Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office, including Excel to create spreadsheets and analyse complex data sets. Achieved 76% for Computing and Data Analysis module.

Other Work Experience

From July 2010

Bar Server, The John Millington pub, Cheadle Hulme

- Responsible for delivering high levels of customer service in this busy pub. Received a customer service award from the Brewery following a Mystery Guest assessment.
- Willing to work flexible hours to meet the demands of the business.
- Supervise food ordering and oversee 2-4 staff members in the restaurant. Selected to attend food brand training by the manager.
- Assist manager with weekly stock takes and frequently given the responsibility of cashing up tills at the end of the night.

2007 – 2009

Checkout Assistant, Somerfield, Cheadle Hulme

- Trained to work in all areas of the store.
- Assisted manager with monthly stock takes.
- Trained 3 new staff members.

Positions of Responsibility and Awards

- Elected student representative for MEarthSci students for 2 years. Successfully negotiated for extra resources on the School intranet and actively participated in course review meetings. I have also participated in open day events for prospective students.
- Completed the Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award, which tested my character in terms of teamwork and leadership during a particularly challenging expedition to the Cairngorms.

Other skills

Languages

Basic conversational Spanish and some written ability.

Driving Licence

Full, clean UK licence (passed 2011).

Interests

- Active member of the Manchester University AAPG Student Chapter (American Association of Petroleum Geologists) and regularly attend seminars and guest lectures. Recently I attended a field trip in collaboration with the University of Leicester to North Yorkshire, looking at analogues for conventional and unconventional hydrocarbon reservoirs.
- Enjoy running and recently completed the Great Manchester Run, raising over £300 for a local hospice.
- I have played guitar from the age of 9 and currently play rhythm guitar in a band.

References

Dr Rose Quartz
School of Earth, Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences
University of Manchester
Williamson Building
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL
rose.quartz@manchester.ac.uk
Tel: 0161 306 9360

John Ewing
Principal Subsea Engineer
Centrica Energy
IQ Building
15 Justice Mill Lane
Aberdeen
AB11 6EQ
john.r.ewing@centrica.com
Tel: 01753 123 456