

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: <http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/applicationsinterviews/faqs/>

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 MACE: Mechanical Engineer

Engineering Graduate Scheme

Vacancy Title: Engineering Graduate Scheme 2017

Salary: £30,000

Vacancy Description: You will be expected to use the knowledge gained from your engineering degree to continuously improve processes and introduce new technology while keeping the 24/7 operation running like clockwork. All this in an environment where health and safety is simply vital. Within 18 months, you'll have the opportunity to run your own shift; to lead and manage the whole process. It's a massive responsibility.

The scheme is factory-based and offers a job with real management team exposure from day one, involvement in the full production lifecycle and a chance to play a high-profile role in our business. That includes running your own factory sooner rather than later.

We want you to lead sooner rather than later and so the course is geared very much towards early achievement. Your continual progress and development throughout the graduate scheme is paramount to your success. You will have an experienced coach and mentor to ensure you progress and keep up to speed. Every 6 months we will assess you against clearly defined objectives. You will receive all the support you require to enable you to meet our business and your personal goals.

Qualifications:

A 2.1 or higher in one of the following Engineering disciplines: Chemical / Mechanical / Process / Electrical / Mechatronics or a degree in Chemistry is the minimum. If you can demonstrate industrial work experience, whether as a placement or summer job, even better.

Skills:

- Willing and able to relocate throughout the course of the scheme.
- Committed to the demands of a top graduate scheme.
- Ability to undertake professional qualifications as and when required.
- You're going to need a 'can-do' attitude plus a passion to excel in large-scale engineering.
- As one of our future leaders, you will also need tenacity, to take pride in your work, an enquiring mind and the ability to deliver innovative, practical solutions.
- You're keen to take on early responsibility because it won't be long before you're a Shift Operations Manager within the factory. That means you'll need great interpersonal skills and have a talent for influencing those around you and promote being safe in the workplace.
- A positive approach will be essential, while the ability to problem solve in innovative and lateral ways will be desirable.

The benefits of a career with British Sugar are an appealing mix of the professional and the financial:

- £30,000, reviewed every six months.
- £1,500 joining bonus.
- Moving Assistance.
- Support towards achieving Chartered status.
- Formal and informal mentoring schemes.
- Opportunities for cross-functional moves.
- 21 days holiday, rising to 26 days after one year of service, plus 8 statutory public holidays.
- Contributory pension scheme.
- Other flexible benefits.
- Professional qualifications sponsorship.

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Education

2013 - **The University of Manchester, MEng Mechanical Engineering**
2017 **First year result: 64%** **Second year result: 65%**

- Modules included: Engineering Thermodynamics, Fluid Mechanics, Mechanical Design, Modelling & Simulation, Advanced Production Processes, Automatic Control and Power Plant Systems.
- Leader of third year team project to specify, design and build a prototype 2 stroke engine mount structure for a new concept of lightweight commercial hovercraft machine to be used in the construction industry.
- Presented final written design report and presentation to our Design Tutors. Finished with a successful onsite demonstration of the engine & mount in one of the new hovercraft units to the Technical Director.

2006 - **Park Royal High School, Surrey**
2013

- A level: Chemistry (A), Mathematics (A*), Physics (A*), Further Mathematics (A)
- GCSEs: 10 (5A*, 3A, 1B, 1C) including Maths and English

Relevant work experience

July - Sept **Health & Beauty Ltd (Trafford Park, Manchester) Project Engineer Intern**
2016

- Responsible for a project to reduce the % scrap produced in a three line shampoo packing department.
- Investigated current operation, looking at equipment design, operation and settings, packing material specifications, suppliers and quality and in shampoo product variability.
- Interviewed current production managers, technical operators and material suppliers and compared data to manufacturing standards.
- Collected scrap data over a two week period using control chart techniques to identify main sources of scrap and to identify possible causes.
- Proposed a 1 week test programme on the “worst line” to evaluate different machine settings (with specific control on packing material and product quality) to measure changes to scrap production.
- Worked with the production team to run the trial and to train them in the changes required. Took charge of a night shift to monitor the impact of a sudden requirement to change label supplier mid test.
- Analysed the results and reported the findings to the Plant Manager. The changes would save £10,000 per month in reduction of scrap production, expected to rise to £22,000 per month when implemented across all three lines.

Work Experience

Sep 2013 **Bull's Head, Chorlton. Bar supervisor (term time)**
- Jul 2015

- Promoted to Bar Supervisor after working for the company for twelve months. Responsible for two staff members, and for ensuring all aspects of a shift ran smoothly in a demanding, customer-focused environment.
- Successfully till trained two new members of staff and received a customer service award from the Brewery following positive feedback from a mystery customer visit.
- Day to day duties included organising stock replenishment and rotation systems, assisting the manager with weekly stock takes and deliveries and accurately cashing up tills at the end of the night.

Positions of Responsibility

2015 - **The University of Manchester Mechanical Engineering Society.**
Present **Social Secretary**

- Elected to committee by peer group after heading up a challenging recruitment campaign on campus and using social media.
- Set up visits to local engineering companies e.g. organised for 30 students to visit SCA (paper company) via an academic contact.
- Increased membership by 35% through effective use of Facebook and innovative activities during Welcome Week.

2015 - **The University of Manchester**
Present **Peer Assisted Study Support (PASS) Leader**

- PASS is designed to help first year students settle into University and support them with their studies.
- Organised and facilitated weekly meetings with up to ten mentees, providing a safe environment for students to work together to solve complex course-related problems.
- Exercised strong time management to schedule and run sessions, as well as responsibility to guide students' understanding, rather than just give them an answer.

Additional Skills

IT: Proficient in the use of MATLAB, and Microsoft Office, including Excel to create spreadsheets and analyse complex data sets.

Driving: Full clean UK driving licence.

Languages: Basic conversational level French and Spanish (GCSE plus visits).

Interests and Activities

Memberships: Student member of Institution of Mechanical Engineers.

Societies: Member of the Debating Society and enjoy participating in competitions and events. Recently organised an evening of guest speakers from industry to present on persuasive public speaking.

Sport: Completed the Race for Life independently, raising £75 for cancer charities.