

WRITING A CV AND COVERING LETTER

Write an impressive CV

Some employers may ask you to provide a CV to apply for their vacancy, or you may use a CV when you are not applying for a job that has been advertised but you would like to work for a particular company, so decide to speculatively apply for any upcoming vacancies!

A strong CV is a typical backbone of most job applications, employers will look to this to find out about your character and decide if they want to invite you to interview. It's your chance to make an outstanding and memorable first impression.

As with your NAS applications, pay great attention to detail and spend as much time thinking of how to prepare your CV as you would an exam question. Think about your wording and style, and match your tone from your NAS applications to your CV.

Covering letters

It's often best to send a covering letter along with your CV. A covering letter introduces yourself to the employer and provides them with a summary of your skills and experience. For example:

Direct Job Application

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for considering my application for the role of Business Admin Apprentice. I am an enthusiastic and reliable student who is looking to develop my skills in administration to start my career.

Kind regards,

Jack Jones

Speculative Job application

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to enquire about any suitable upcoming vacancies within your organisation. I am an enthusiastic and reliable student who is looking to develop my skills in administration to start my career.

Kind regards,

Jack Jones

Understand what the employer is looking for:

Applying for an apprenticeship, especially an advanced apprenticeship, is not the same as applying for a normal job. Employers will not necessarily expect you to have qualifications, or prior work experience. Instead, they'll be looking for qualities, skills and attributes that imply you'd be a good fit for the job.

Before completing your CV, write down a list of everything you think the employer could be looking for and be prepared to describe how you fit the bill. For example, if you wanted to work as a Business Administrator, you'll

want to show that you have effective time management and organisation skills in your CV.

It's also worth noting that applicants trying to secure a higher apprenticeship should write a longer and more detailed CV, as there will be much more competition.

Make it look professional:

Remember this is a big step up from being in school, college or sixth form. You will be expected to work and present yourself in a professional manner at all times, it therefore makes a good first impression to show professionalism in your CV.

Hints and Tips to set out your CV

Use a simple font, divide sections clearly and use bullet points where possible for ease of reading. Here's a few things you should make sure you include in your CV:

Introduction / Personal Profile – One short paragraph, around 4 or 5 sentences about you and what you can offer an employer. This should show some flair, and help the employer understand your personality through the way you write.

Key Skills and Education – As you will most likely have limited work experience, you'll instead want to list your GCSEs, any notable academic achievements and transferable skills that you learnt from school. You may have picked up skills like timekeeping, through the use of a revision planner, or perseverance, through re-submitting coursework to attain a higher grade.

Work experience – List any work experience you have, including voluntary work and school work experience placements. Even if you think it may be irrelevant, you can still highlight any transferable skills learned, like we mentioned earlier. For example, if you're thinking of applying for an engineering apprenticeship, but you previously did work experience in customer service, you could say that you gained valuable communication skills and the ability to think on your feet – desirable qualities in any future engineer.

Other relevant info and Interests /Hobbies – Only include other information if it's relevant to your job role. If you wanted to become a lawyer and your family are all lawyers, mention it, as you may already know certain terminology and have potential support. You should always include relevant hobbies or interests as it tells the employer more about your personality, if you had any responsibilities like being a captain of a team, add that to.

Tailor each CV to the different employers - Make sure you spend an adequate amount of time researching and understanding what the employer will be looking for, as tempting as it may be to duplicate your CV, it'll impress employers to see that you're invested in working for them.