



# How to Write a CV

Tips from ALSA UK

Welcome to our comprehensive guide on writing your best CV. This guide is designed to provide you with valuable insights and practical tips on creating an effective CV, with illustrative examples showcasing both exemplary CV's and common pitfalls to help you stand out in the job market.

## Overview

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A CV does not need to list everything you've ever done. In fact, it really is true that most employers spend 6-8 seconds screening your CV. Follow the steps below to write your perfect CV.

1

### **Comprehensive Brainstorming**

Begin by brainstorming all the roles you've held, responsibilities you've undertaken, and skills you've gained throughout your education, work experience, internships, volunteer work, and extracurricular activities. This will serve as a foundation for selecting and prioritising the most relevant information to include on your CV. By starting with a thorough brainstorming session, you ensure that you don't overlook any valuable experiences or skills that could enhance your CV.

2

### **Tailor your CV**

Tailoring your CV to the job specification is crucial for maximising your chances of getting the job. By aligning your qualifications, skills, and experiences with the specific requirements outlined in the job description, you demonstrate a genuine interest in the role. This not only increases the relevance of your application but also showcases your ability to understand and meet the employer's needs. To tailor your CV effectively, carefully analyse the job specifications, highlight keywords, and emphasise relevant achievements and experiences that directly align.

3

### **Showcase Your Achievements with Quantifiable Results**

Employers are often more interested in what you have accomplished rather than just your responsibilities. Whenever possible, quantify your achievements using numbers, percentages, or other measurable indicators. For example, instead of simply stating that you increased sales, specify the percentage increase or revenue generated. Quantifiable results provide concrete evidence of your capabilities and make your CV more impactful and persuasive to potential employers. If you're in a role where you don't have quantifiable results, use active words to showcase your skills e.g. analysed, coordinated, designed, developed, liaised...

4

### **Proofread**

Spelling mistakes, grammatical errors, and formatting inconsistencies can undermine the professionalism of your CV and create a negative impression on potential employers. Before submitting your CV, thoroughly proofread it to ensure accuracy and clarity. Consider asking a friend, family member, or ALSA to review it as well, as fresh eyes can catch mistakes you might have overlooked. Use spell check tools and grammar-checking software to help identify and correct errors. A polished CV reflects attention to detail and professionalism, increasing your credibility as a candidate.

# Example 1 - Finance

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## Albin Kutti

87 North Street, Ferizaj, N7 6DP  
[albini@example.com](mailto:albini@example.com)  
07307798198

### PERSONAL PROFILE

Goal driven, committed financial advisor with 5+ years of commercial experience.

Including a personal profile is optional – it's a good way to make a strong first impression. Use 6-8 sentences to highlight your most impressive and relevant examples, keeping in mind the job requirements.

### WORK EXPERIENCE

#### Finance Specialist

*Example Finance, London*

**Dec 23 - Present**

- Implemented a new annual forecasting model with improvement of 32% accuracy rate.
- Provide financial expertise and advice to companies, successfully securing a corporate contract for Kosovo Constructions worth £12M over two years.
- Provide audit and analysis, making recommendations based on findings.
- Identified investment opportunity for a beauty industry client, GloCare, which led to a £1M acquisition.
- Negotiated improved contracts with subcontractors of Greenvale Development, which increased profit margin by 3.8%
- Briefed and prepared CFO and CEO for C-level client meetings over 50 times.

If you have a good amount of work experience, you can list this first before education.

#### Trainee Finance Advisor

*Phonik Accounting, London*

**September 2019 - October 2023**

- Filed VAT and corporation tax returns with HMRC for 250+ self-employed and small company clients with 100% accuracy.
- Compiled and organised financial data, ensuring accuracy and completeness for use in client reports.
- Prepared regular financial reports and statements, highlighting key insights and recommendations.

Show off your skills and results – quantify and use statistics! These details are what they're looking for.

### VOLUNTARY WORK

#### Treasurer at the Albanian Student Association UK

**August 2023 - present**

- Implemented and maintained effective financial controls, ensuring responsible use of funds, monitoring income, expenses and cash flow.
- Create accurate and timely financial reports to the board and stakeholders.
- Collaborated to develop annual budgets and aligning financial resources with organisational goals.

Including voluntary work is optional. It's a good opportunity for you to show interests outside of your field and you can include any bonus skills.

#### Oxfam Charity Shop Volunteer

**2017 - 2018**

- Enhanced organisation skills and ability to pay attention to detail by arranging donations.
- Ability to work under pressure in busy environments and adapting to new roles including working at the till when understaffed
- Proactively engaged with customers, delivering high levels of customer service at all times.

## EDUCATION

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**BSc Accounting & Finance Queen Mary University of London**

First Class Honours

**Woodcross Sixth Form**

**A-levels:** Mathematics (A), Business studies (A), Biology (B)

**Example Secondary School**

**GCSEs:** 10 GCSEs (A\*-A) including English (A) and Mathematics (A\*)

July 2019

July 2016

2011-2016

Save space by listing all education together. Employers want something easy to read.

Consistency is key – write dates all in the same format, unlike Albin has done here

## AWARDS & CERTIFICATES

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Leadership Course, Institute for Leadership, Albanian School

Certificate in Green and Sustainable Finance, Business Example Institute

## LANGUAGES

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English (fluent)

Albanian (fluent)

## REFERENCES

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Available upon request

You don't have to include references – should you chose to make sure you check with your referees.

\*Note - this is not an example of a perfect CV. In fact as you can see in the comments, there are many areas Albin can improve on. Make sure you take these into consideration when writing your CV.

# Example 2 - Engineering

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CV's can look different depending on your field. This student engineering CV focuses on modules and relevant learning for the job, including specific projects to highlight accomplishments.

**NAME HERE**

EMAIL | MOBILE NO.

You could also include specific grades to show achievement in those topics.

## EDUCATION

**MEng Engineering Science, Example University**

**Expected Graduation June 2023**

Year 3 Modules: Engineering Computation, Engineering in Society, Engineering Practical Work, Solid Mechanics, Materials, Structures and Hydraulics, Soil Mechanics, and Biomechanics, **Group Design Project (Design of a Bridge)**

Year 4 Modules: Advanced Structures, Geotechnics, Hydraulics, Environmental Engineering, Production Engineering, Management Practice, **Research Project: PISA Design model to analyse monopile foundations for offshore wind turbine structures**

Awarded an EXHIBITION award (University of Example) in 2020, 2021 and 2022, due to academic excellence.

**Example College** 4 A-levels: Two A\*s, Two As **2017 - 2019**

**Example School** 11 GCSEs: Two 9s, seven A\*s, one A, one 6 **2012 - 2017**

## WORK EXPERIENCE

**Engineering Intern at Example London**

**June 2022 – August 2022**

- **Assisted** in the work for a Mitigation Designers Monitoring Plan of 7 structures located above the HS2 running tunnels.
- **Drew schematics** of the monitoring plans of the structures on AutoCAD and updated these as changes were made.
- **Provided** horizontal and vertical ground movement trigger values for early warning to enable need for mitigation to be assessed.
- **Undertook** a Ground Movement Assessment using Oasys XDisp for a Network Rail bridge to determine the anticipated impact.
- **Completed** an Optioneering Report for a bridge, including classifying the damage category using Burland Strain Limits.

**Work Experience Placement, at Example**

**July 2018**

- Successful week of work experience, given insight into the world of work, and the engineering industry.
- **Learnt** the processes involved in developing projects based on customer requirements.
- **Designed, built and tested** an audio level indicator and presented work to 4 higher-level engineers within the company.

## OTHER EXPERIENCE AND VOLUNTEERING

**Student Ambassador, Example University**

**Nov 2020 - Present**

- Provide support to prospective applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds and give insight into Oxford through Q&As and tours.
- Assisted an engineering professor with the running of two engineering interview workshops, each attended by over 25 students, breaking down and presenting key mathematical and physics concepts that are used in admission interviews.

**Engineering Lead, Albanian Student Association UK (ALSA UK)**

**Aug 2020 – Present**

- Organise events, give talks, and provide support to students looking to study engineering, throughout the application process.
- Hosted, led the organisation of, and took part in the successful event 'A Future in Engineering', streamed live online, where a panel of 6 students of different engineering disciplines gave talks about studying Engineering at university-level.

Allocate space according to what is important/relevant. See how there is less space of GCSE's/A-Levels as your degree is more relevant.

Note the active words in red – this shows of your skill development in that role.

Referencing specific projects is a great way to highlight achievements and show real world experience.

Including non-engineering related experience can be beneficial for many reasons – it shows your transferable skills, adaptability and interests outside of engineering.

**Director of Internal Events, *Example University Society***

**Sep 2021 – June 2022**

- Oversaw the organisation of events for engineering students within the university. Duties included contacting and communicating with speakers and sponsors, liaising with host venues, and solving any problems that occur during an event.
- 4 social and networking events were planned to bring together over 100 engineering students in total across the 4 occasions.

Don't have enough experience? Think of extracurriculars at university/school, part-time jobs, nothing is irrelevant!

**Shop Assistant, *at Shop 1***

**Jun 2017 – Aug 2019**

- Worked two shifts per week, adapted communication styles to build rapport with customers, regulars as well as tourists.
- Maintained a high level of hygiene and cleanliness by keeping eating and kitchen areas tidy, managed stock levels.

**SKILLS**

- **Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams, etc.):** Advanced level proficiency
- Proficient in the use of engineering software: **MATLAB, Solid Works, SAP2000, PLAXIS 3D, AutoCAD and Oasys XDisp.**
- Fluent (Native) in **English** and **Albanian**
- Other Qualifications: German: Fast Track – Stage 2+3 (CEFR\* A2+) & Level 1 Certificate in Personal Finance (Distinction)

**REFERENCES**

References are available upon request.

An extra opportunity to include any skills not listed above – particularly those relevant to the job!

# Example 3 - Law

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**Education**

<b>University of Example</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>1st Year:</b> Predicted: First Class Honours</li><li>• <b>2nd Year:</b> First Class Honours</li><li>• <b>3rd Year:</b> First Class Honours</li></ul>	<b>LLB Law (Hons)</b>	<b>2021-2024</b>
<b>Example School Sixth Form</b> Mathematics [A], Law [A], Politics [A]	<b>A-Levels</b>	<b>2019-2021</b>

You can always include your predicted final grade if you have not yet completed your studies.

**Legal Work Experience**

<b>Social Mobility Programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accepted onto the <b>[Social Mobility Programme]</b> which assists aspiring solicitors from under-represented and socially mobile backgrounds to access to work experience, mentoring and weekly training with top law firms.</li><li>• Attend multiple insight days at various law firms, which included networking, workshop participation and training sessions as well as being paired with a mentor.</li><li>• Gain insight into different law firm's culture, business development strategies and approaches to client interactions, which has widened my understanding of the commercial law industry.</li></ul>	<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Jan 24 - Present</b>
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If you have relevant experience in the field, draw attention to it with a subheading.

**Legal Advice Clinic**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acquired practical legal knowledge through exposure to real life cases.</li><li>• Shadowed experienced lawyers during advice sessions and gained valuable insight into delivering client advice.</li><li>• Attended triage and fact-finding calls and undertook verbatim notes on the client's legal issues.</li><li>• Conducted in depth legal research ensuring accuracy and relevance when drafting letter of advice for clients.</li><li>• Developed drafting skills by volunteering to draft various legal documents such as drafting letters of advice.</li><li>• Demonstrated competence in using a legal case management system, for organising the client's case and streamlining workflow.</li></ul>	<b>Student Adviser</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>
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Be consistent with your dates – if you are going to include months, do it for all.

**Solicitors Firm**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Three-month work experience placement at a law firm specialising in [Insert Practice Areas]</li><li>• Interacted with legal professionals and assisted solicitors with the preparation of bundles, drafting skeleton arguments, answering an influx of calls, and forwarding relevant client enquiries to relevant departments.</li><li>• Shadowed barristers and solicitors at tribunals which has developed my knowledge of procedural requirements in litigation and court proceedings.</li><li>• Developed my knowledge of judicial review, by discussing ongoing cases with solicitors at the firm.</li></ul>	<b>Administrative Assistant</b>	<b>June 23-Aug 23</b>
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**Mentoring**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One day work experience with the <b>[Name of Organisation]</b>, organised by <b>[Mentoring Scheme]</b>.</li><li>• Participated in online group sessions learning about the <b>[Name of Organisation]</b> products, culture, life of an in-house counsel and general business operations.</li><li>• Gained insight on the various diverse routes to qualification to become a lawyer taken by the members of the Legal team, imposter syndrome, CV / application tips and developed resilience and confidence-building skills.</li><li>• Reviewed and analysed a <b>[Name of Organisation]</b> mutual non-disclosure agreement.</li><li>• Developed an understanding into in-house legal teams compared to private practice, and how a global financial organisation like <b>[Name of Organisation]</b> functions.</li></ul>	<b>Legal Insight Day</b>	<b>July 2023</b>
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Don't have a lot of hands-on experience? What about insight days? Shadowing opportunities? These demonstrated your learning and interest in the field.

## Non-legal work experience

**Albanian Student Association UK**      **Events Team**      *June 2021 - present*

- Support the Chair in daily admin tasks such as interviews, meetings and keeping in touch with volunteers through various platforms of communication such as social media, emails and slack.
- Organised and led the annual ALSA birthday picnic, demonstrating organisational and leadership skills.
- Assisted with the organisation of a CV Clinic event. Interviewed a Trainee Solicitor, on how to tailor and write CVs and applications and narrated the interactive Q&A session.
- Led the organisation of the Networking with ALSA: Navigating the Legal World at Herbert Smith Freehills aimed at increasing access to the legal profession. Overlooked the logistics of the event, the selection of the location, securing prominent speakers and coordinating with our marketing team to create promotional social media posts.

Don't just describe what your responsibilities were, demonstrate what you gained from this role, what skills you learned and how you can apply them to this role.

**Shop 1**      **Part Time Sales Assistant**      *Sep-Dec 22*

- Customer facing position, ensuring excellent customer service and support to team members.
- Adapt to changing environments due to rotations in different sections and brands on the shop floor to ensure that there is assistance at hand for customers.
- Develop extensive knowledge of all products, brands, and features to merchandise and replenish stock as directed.
- Operate tills and handle financial transactions using the point-of-sale system.

## Positions of Responsibility

**University of Example, Society of Example**      **Vice President**      *2021- 2022*

- Aiding the President of the society, by overseeing the logistics of events, fundraising and sponsorships.
- Ensuring consistent communication flow to members, fostering engagement and keeping them informed.
- Liaising effectively with the Student Union and other key stakeholders of the society to foster collaboration and enhance communication.
- Drive event and activity promotion within the member base, maximising participation and impact.
- Managing the organisation's social media and email platforms, by maintaining a dynamic and engaging online presence.

Tailor your CV – are you going for a leadership role? Include positions of responsibility that may be relevant to the employer.

**Law School of Example**      **Module Representative**      *2021-2022*

- Supported communication between the module cohort and module leader, by attending meetings on a continuous weekly basis to maintain frequent communication.
- Assisted the administration of the module by collecting feedback from my peers and myself to develop strategies for teaching and develop the curriculum.

## Languages

**English and Albanian:** both native proficiency in speaking, writing, and reading

# Final Tips

Remember to **stay honest and authentic** on your CV to build trust with potential employers. Don't make the mistake of not **updating regularly**. Keep your CV up-to-date with your most recent experiences, skills, and accomplishments. This ensure that your CV reflects your current

qualifications and increases its relevance to potential employers. Approach CV writing with a **positive mindset** and confidence in your abilities. Your CV is a reflection of your professional identity and potential, so convey enthusiasm and optimism about your career aspirations and what you can bring to the table. **You've got this.**



**GOOD LUCK**