

University of Leeds Careers Service

Guidelines for writing CVs and Covering Letters

These guidelines identify the principles of a good CV and covering letter. They are our recommendations as a starting point **and will need to be adapted for specific employers and tailored to each role for which you are applying.**

Your faculty may also have additional CV resources.

Please use these guidelines to draft your CV and covering letter, then submit them through our online [CV and covering letter checker](#) to gain instant scores and feedback on how they could be improved.

The University of Leeds is committed to the appropriate and responsible use of generative AI, and to enabling our students to understand the opportunities, limitations and ethical issues associated with the use of these tools. Our online CV Checker is representative of the AI tools used by employers to screen applications and can provide detailed, tailored feedback on your CV and cover letter. Like all AI tools, it does have its limitations; however, we recommend that you use it to create a first draft of your CV. Once you have put your CV and covering letter through our CV checker and achieved a score of 70, if you would still like additional application support to review or tailor your documents to a specific opportunity, please book an on campus in-person or an online appointment via [MyCareer](#).

Whether you prefer to book an in-person appointment at the Careers Centre or an online appointment, [please attach your documents for review to the appointment booking form.](#)

Structure / Format

- Avoid using personal pronouns.
- Have a consistent format across your CV and covering letter.
- Use a font size of 10-12 (Arial and Calibri look clean and modern).
- Phone number - mobile recommended, split into 5 then 6 digits, e.g. 07777 123456
- University email address recommended whilst a student at Leeds or personal email address if you are a graduate.
- Keep your formatting simple - no boxes or columns (apart from optional use for technical skills), no borders, no photographs. Avoid CV templates.
- Use **bold** typeface sparingly (e.g. for headings) and *italics* only for publications.
- Use bullet points (not dashes, stars etc.) Each bullet point should be 2-3 lines only. Start each bullet point with an action verb, e.g. collaborated, initiated, implemented
- Dates on either the left-hand or right-hand side - be consistent throughout your CV.
- Use either ALL full stops or NO full stops at the end of each bullet point. Be consistent.
- When using numbers in descriptions, express them as one to ten (in words) 11 -10,000 (in numerals).

Sections

Start with what you are currently doing and work backwards in each section, in reverse

chronological order.

- At the top - name, email, mobile phone number, LinkedIn as a website link if appropriate. Don't include date of birth, nationality or gender. Your address is optional; it's fine to just add your location, e.g. Leeds, UK or leave it out.
- Education - Degree first, relevant modules, include all relevant qualifications. Year Abroad, Year in Industry. Include grades, actual and/or expected.
- Work Experience. This can include paid / unpaid work and volunteering.
- Interests and Achievements. Can include relevant podcasts you have listened to/documentaries you have watched/publications you read to keep up to date with industry developments and current affairs.
- References – Optional. No need to include full details – can just put “Available upon request” or omit this if short of space.
- We don't recommend a personal profile unless it is specifically asked for by the employer or the CV does not have a covering letter with it. If you do include one, it should be tailored to the specific role you are applying for, and include relevant experience and what you are looking for, e.g. Consumer Analytics and Marketing Strategy Master's student with relevant experience in luxury brands, now seeking a role in....
- Optional sections if not already covered: Additional courses (at an institution or online), Internships (in person or virtual), Positions of Responsibility/Leadership, Awards, Publications, Voluntary Work, Additional Skills (e.g. languages), Technical Skills, Project Work

Content

Use the CV and covering letter to show how you meet the essential and desirable criteria for the job, as listed in the job description/person specification.

The type of CV depends on the level of experience required for the role: broadly speaking, traditional CVs are easier to read. With little or no relevant experience, a skills-based CV may be more suitable, as it can help to highlight the transferable skills you could bring to the new role but discuss this with your Careers /Faculty Staff.

A one-page CV is preferable for some areas of employment such as investment banking or management consultancy. If in doubt, check with the employer.

- Be clear and concise. Employers usually scan CVs in about 8 seconds so it has to be easy for them to find key points. AI is increasingly used to scan CVs so use keywords from the job description and / or person specification.
- Check spelling and grammar. Avoid using the same word multiple times and proofread that there are no missing words in sentences.
- Use plain English to express experience. Use technical terms where appropriate. Mirror the company terminology where appropriate.
- Provide context not just a list of things you have done. Try to provide details of impact, e.g. Increased traffic to the website by 35%.
- Pick the most relevant information for the role, you don't have to include everything you have ever done.

Two-page Traditional CV Template

NAME

Contact details can include: address/location (optional), email (as a hyperlink), phone number
LinkedIn and/or other relevant online presence (as a hyperlink)

Education / Education and Qualifications

Dates from - to, University of Leeds, Title of Degree, Grade (actual or expected)

Include modules if they are relevant to the job you are applying for.

Year in Industry - Title of Degree (Industry).

Study abroad - Title of Degree (International).

Details of relevant modules studied.

Dates from - to, Name of School / College

A Levels (or equivalent) - Subject (grade), Subject (grade), Subject (grade).

GCSEs (or equivalent) - e.g. 10 GCSEs at grades A*-C or 9-6 (including Mathematics and English).

Technical Skills/Lab Skills (Optional)

Engineering / STEM degrees may find this section useful to highlight technical skills. Boxes are allowed for this section.

Project Work (Optional)

Projects carried out as part of degree - research projects, group projects, group tasks and presentations may be relevant to some applications to demonstrate specific technical knowledge for example.

Adapt the title of this section to be relevant to your sector e.g. if studying a Marketing degree and applying for a marketing role, this could be called 'Marketing Projects'.

Use bullet points:

- What was the project?
- Who did you work with and what was the aim?
- What did you do? (duties) - start with action verb (see [this article](#) on action verbs).
- Quantify where possible, e.g. presented at a conference of 300 delegates

Incorporate the skills developed into the bullet points above. Identify relevant keywords to include from the job description (e.g. analytical skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills).

Work Experience

This can be placements, internships, work shadowing, paid employment, voluntary work and extra-curricular experience. Start with examples which are directly related to the job for which you are applying.

Date from - to, Job Title, Company, Location

What did you do? Start with an action verb (see [this article](#) on action verbs) and quantify your answers if applicable. What was the result? Did you receive positive feedback from colleagues / clients? What impact did you make?

Give examples which illustrate the skills required for the job and incorporate key words from the job description, e.g. Collaborated with a team of five colleagues to....

Voluntary Work (Optional)

If you have undertaken a lot of volunteering roles, you may want a separate voluntary work experience section rather than including it all under the general heading of Work Experience.

Additional Skills

Language (level) e.g. French (Intermediate), German (basic).

IT skills - Outlook, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SPSS, Facebook, Twitter.

Full UK Clean Driving Licence (only if requested in the job description).

Positions of Responsibility (Optional)

Positions within the last three years ideally.

Interests and Achievements

Add any activities you do in your spare time with some detail e.g.

Running - ran Race for Life (2021), raising £230 for Cancer charities.

Member of University of Leeds Symphony Orchestra, demonstrating commitment through weekly rehearsals and monthly concerts.

Enjoy watching documentaries on a variety of topics i.e. Science, Politics, Economics, History

References

Optional. No need to include full details – can just put “Available on request” or omit this if short of space.

Use the full two pages.

Example of a two-page traditional CV

Jo Blogowski

07700 000777 | j.blogowski@leeds.ac.uk | Leeds, UK | LinkedIn: Jo Blogowski

Education and Qualifications

September 2020 - July 2023 BA Geography, University of Leeds, Predicted 1st Class

Relevant modules: Helsinki: Urban Growth and Sustainability; The Making of the Modern City; Living within limits: natural resource management for sustainable development

- Represented the views of peers at staff student meetings as Course Rep for two years.
- Regularly collaborate with international colleagues as part of course, developing global mindset.

September 2013 - June 2020 Northtown High School, Northtown

A-levels: Geography (A*), Economics (A), Psychology (A)

GCSEs: 10 GCSEs at grades A*- B (including English and Mathematics)

Work Experience

August 2022 - June 2023 Project Assistant, Netherlands Floating Communities, Alkmaar

- Collaborated with three Dutch Floating Communities to examine sustainability of housing populations on water.
- Influenced stakeholders at regular community meetings and liaised with authorities.
- Interpreted complex data, producing monthly reports on findings for stakeholders.
- Presented results to 300 members of Floating Communities Parliamentary Task Force gaining support for further expansion of the model.

June 2021 - August 2021 Project Assistant, Greening the City, Leeds City Council

- Analysed data on urban air quality and temperature hotspots in relation to providing green amenity space to improve climactic conditions in urban centres.
- Devised solutions to reducing air pollution in city centre using greening techniques.
- Researched, gathered and collated data on vertical gardens to green the landscape and output from hydroponic methods for sustainable food production in urban spaces.
- Presented findings to 150 members of Leeds City Council with the council voting in favour of adopting recommended measures.

July 2020 - August 2020 Project Assistant, Custom Build Homes, Northtown

- Coordinated internal and external projects including the sales and marketing processes for 10 custom-built developments.
- Consulted on development to allow custom building suitable for scaling.
- Recommended and targeted custom build development opportunities to the market.
- Focused on the delivery of the new Custom Build Developer Portal and Directory, increasing traffic to the website by 47%.

July 2016 - July 2018 Barista, The Corner Coffee Shop, Northtown

- Delivered excellent customer service in a pressured, fast-paced environment to multiple clientele.
- Managed counters and cafe, collaborating in a team of three to meet targets.
- Monitored stock levels, oversaw staff rotas and training schedules.
- Reconciled cash taken at the end of each shift - over £1000 a day.

Additional Skills

Language Skills:

- English (fluent), Polish (fluent), German (fluent), Russian (basic).

IT Skills:

- Proficient in MS Office packages, including Outlook, Teams, Word, Excel, PowerPoint.
- Proficient in digital media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WordPress.
- Knowledge of SPSS, GIS, ArcGIS, Promap.

Interests and Achievements

- Led a team of four on a five-day expedition using map-reading and compass skills to gain Duke of Edinburgh Gold award.
- Volunteered twice weekly for two years in the Sustainable Gardening Group at the University of Leeds.
- Running - ran three half-marathons raising over £2000 supporting three different cancer charities.

References available on request

One Page CV Template

NAME

Contact Details can include

Address/location (optional), email (as a hyperlink), mobile phone number (**** *),
LinkedIn and/or other relevant online presence (as a hyperlink)

Education

Dates from - to, University of Leeds, Title of Degree, Grade (actual or expected) Include modules if they are relevant to the job you are applying for.

Year in Industry - Title of Degree (Industry).

Study abroad - Title of Degree (International) Details of relevant modules studied.

Dates from - to, Name of School / College

A Levels (or equivalent) - Subject (grade), Subject (grade), Subject (grade).

GCSEs (or equivalent) - e.g. 10 GCSEs grade A*-C or 9-6 (including Mathematics and English).

Work Experience

This can be placements, internships, work shadowing, paid employment, voluntary work, university projects and extra-curricular experience. Start with examples which are directly related to the job for which you are applying.

Date - Date, Job Title, Company, Location

What did you do? Start with action verb (see [this article](#) on action verbs) and quantify where possible, e.g. in a team of six, increased traffic to the website by 35%.

What was the result? Did you receive positive feedback from colleagues / clients? What impact did you make?

Interests and Achievements

Add any activities you do in your spare time with context e.g.

Running - ran Race for Life, raising £230 for Cancer charities.

Member of University of Leeds Symphony Orchestra, demonstrating commitment through weekly rehearsals and monthly concerts.

References

References – Optional. No need to include full details – can just put “Available on request” or omit this if short of space.

Example of a one-page CV

Anna McPherson

07312 345215 | a.mcpherson@leeds.ac.uk | LinkedIn
123 Gold Street, Liverpool, L43 2AB

Education

Sept 2020 – Present, University of Leeds, BSC (Hons) Banking and Finance, 2:1 (expected grade)

Key modules: Economics of Business and Corporate Strategy (70%), Risk Management in Banking (69%), Investment Banking (69%)

Sept 2013 – July 2020, Circle Lane Sixth Form, Liverpool

A-Levels: Economics (A*), Maths (A*) German (A)

GCSEs: 9 GCSEs grade A*-C (including Mathematics and English).

Work Experience

June 2022 – August 2022, Financial Services Summer Internship, Financial Conduct Authority, London

- Conducted weekly market research and analysis within the 26-person supervision, policy & competition division.
- Reviewed and collated 13 quantitative datasets in an independent project to upgrade the digital enforcement of serious financial misconduct. Presented key findings to company internal and external stakeholders.
- Appraised applications for FCA regulation and executed quantitative risk analysis, adhering to company guidelines.
- Presented my experiences within the company to 25 undergraduates during their insight programme.

October 2021 – May 2022, Secretary, LUU Consulting Society, Leeds

- Spearheaded termly members meetings and networking events to discuss developments and trends in the consulting sector.
- Overhauled the existing pro-bono consultancy project system through the introduction of a strategic leadership structure. The implementation saw a 47% rise in client satisfaction across all 23 SME partnerships.
- Organised a 'Women into Consultancy' event to promote female participation within the international consulting workforce, contributing to UN Sustainable Development Goal 5.

Achievements and Interests

- 3rd place in McKinsey & Company 'Solve it UK' competition (2022).
- Member of the fencing society. Attendance of tri-weekly training sessions. Winner of the Exeter Open 2021 (intermediate).
- Participant in the Laidlaw Leadership and Research Program.
- Proficient user of Microsoft Office, including Excel and Teams.
- Regularly listen to relevant podcasts to keep up to date with industry developments.

References – Available on request

Skills-based CV Template

NAME

Contact Details can include

Address/Location (optional), email, mobile phone number (***** *),
LinkedIn and/or other relevant online presence

Education

Dates from - to, University of Leeds, Title of Degree, Grade (actual or expected) Include modules if they are relevant to the job you are applying for.

Year in Industry - Title of Degree (Industry).

Study abroad - Title of Degree (International).

Details of relevant modules studied.

Dates from - to, Name of School / College

A Levels (or equivalent) - Subject (grade), Subject (grade), Subject (grade).

GCSEs (or equivalent) - e.g. 10 GCSEs grade A*-C or 9-6 (including Mathematics and English).

Relevant Skills

Use this section to highlight how you meet the essential criteria for the job, as listed in the job description/person specification. Use skills from the essential criteria as headings with specific examples to demonstrate this skill. Draw examples from your degree, projects & presentations, paid work, placements, internships, extracurricular activity, voluntary work. Start each example with an action verb (see [this article](#) on action verbs). No more than 2/3 lines per bullet point.

e.g. Communication

- Presented to 150 delegates at House of Commons as a representative of Asthma UK, proposing solutions to poor air quality in UK.
- Led talks and tours to groups of 10 students around campus on open days, answering enquiries and promoting university courses and services.

Organisation & Time Management

- Liaised with venue to organise 'Strictly Come Dancing' event as Vice-President of the Latin & Ballroom society, attracting 100 students to try dancing for the first time.
- Updated records of students and employers in Campus Internship, adhering to GDPR regulations when inputting data into spreadsheets and databases.

Additional Skills

Language (level) e.g. French (Intermediate), German (basic).

IT skills - Outlook, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SPSS, Facebook, Twitter.

Full UK Clean Driving Licence (if requested in the job description).

Work Experience

A summary of experience including job title and brief duties if relevant.

July 2017 - June 2018	University of Leeds, Student Ambassador
Oct 2016 - June 2017	Asthma UK, Leeds, Volunteer Outreach Assistant
May 2015 - June 2018	Laura's Cafe, Harrogate, Retail Assistant

Interests and Achievements

Add any activities you do in your spare time with some detail e.g.

Running - ran Race for Life, raising £230 for Cancer charities.

Member of University of Leeds Symphony Orchestra, demonstrating commitment through weekly rehearsals and monthly concerts.

References

Optional. No need to include full details – can just put “Available on request” or omit this if short of space.

Skills-based CV Example

Alice Smith

12 Wellington Street, Leeds LS6 1AB
07865 457890 LinkedIn: [Alice Smith](#)

Education

2020-Present, University of Leeds, Philosophy (International), 2:1 (expected)

Relevant Modules: Research in Philosophy (71%), Beginners Mandarin (70%), Creating a Narrative Podcast in Philosophy (63%), Marketing (67%)

2018-2020, Leicester South Sixth Form

A Levels – Philosophy (A), Law (A), English Literature (B).

2013-2018, Low Street Secondary School

10 GCSEs grade A*-C or 9-6 (including 6 in Mathematics and 7-7 English).

Relevant Skills

Communication

- Completed the 'Creating a Narrative Podcast in Philosophy' module, learning skills in presenting, engaging listeners and making content accessible for a wide range of audiences
- Communicated with customers whilst working on the tills, shop floor and stock room as a Shop Volunteer at Oxfam
- Collaborated with a group of five to present to over 100 students on social media strategy for Marketing discovery module
- Adapted my style of communication to engage both disabled and non-disabled children aged 5-10 in a variety of activities, whilst working as a Play Volunteer at Challengers

Organisation & Time Management

- Coordinated meeting times for group presentation for Marketing discovery module by setting up time availability polls and booking meeting rooms across campus
- Managed multiple priorities, creating a personal calendar throughout the year to organise study time, society commitments and volunteering

Teamwork

- Collaborated with a diverse team of 20 people, serving customers and ensuring the smooth running of the restaurant when working in Nando's as a Waitress,
- Planned sessions for local secondary schools in a team of 6 with the Philosophy Society, creating presentations and engaging resources for classes of up to 30 students

Resilience

- Demonstrated resilience by attending additional study skills workshops and improving my first-year grades from 59% to 71% in my final year
- Managed over 100 customers per hour in a busy city centre Nando's restaurant, coordinating with other waitresses to ensure the best customer service in a high-pressure environment

Additional Skills

- Languages: English (Native), German (Intermediate), Mandarin (Beginner)
- Proficient user of Microsoft Office including Teams, Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and social media platforms including Instagram, Facebook and Twitter

Work Experience

- July 2021 - June 2022 Oxfam, Shop Volunteer
- Oct 2019 – Feb 2020 Waitress, Nando's
- May 2018 - June 2019 Play Volunteer, Challengers

Interests and Achievements

- Running - ran Leeds half marathon, raising £500 for the MS Society
- Member of University of Leeds Philosophy society, demonstrating commitment through attending weekly events, including guest speakers and taking part in their volunteering sessions in local secondary schools
- Volunteered with the Philosophy Society as a Shop Volunteer for Oxfam and for Challengers, helping young disabled children enjoy safe play
- Regularly listen to podcasts on sustainability and climate change, with a focus on corporate social responsibility and how businesses can become more sustainable

References

Available upon request

Academic CVs

If you are applying for an academic job, your CV should focus more on your academic achievements, research interests, teaching experience (if applicable) and specialist skills.

An academic CV is the only type of CV where it is acceptable for it to be longer than two pages, to enable you to incorporate details of your PhD and other relevant research. It can be several pages long but still needs to be concisely written, and structured and formatted in a clear, consistent way (refer to general guidelines on how to write a traditional CV, earlier in this document).

Your academic achievements should take precedence. As well as the sections in a traditional 2-page CV, you should include additional headings such as Publications, Conferences (where you have presented), Professional Memberships and Awards.

Include specific sections on your Research and Teaching Experience. You can still include your Employment History/Work Experience, but if it is not related to research or teaching, this should appear further down your CV.

As with all CVs, an academic CV should be tailored to the job description for the specific role that you are applying for.

You can access lots of academic CV examples here: <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researcher-careers/researcher-cv-examples> We have also included an example below.

Alejandra Aguilar

40 Newport View, Leeds, LS6 3BX

07700 000444 ed18jq@leeds.ac.uk LinkedIn: Ale Aguilar

Education

2022-present PhD(c) in Education, Faculty of Social Sciences

- Thesis title: Mental health and teenagers' identity development. University of Leeds, United Kingdom.
- Supervised by:
Dr. Peter Hart Lecturer in Inclusion, Childhood and Youth, Dr. Anne Luke Lecturer in Childhood Studies.
- First year evaluation to be accepted as Ph.D. candidate passed without corrections.

2019-2020 Childhood Studies Master of Arts Degree with Distinction. University of Leeds, United Kingdom

- Thesis title: Covid-19, public spaces, and children: perceptions of use of public space in global health crises.

2011- 2017 Clinical Psychology, Pontificia Catholic University of Ecuador, Quito-Ecuador

- Thesis title: The perception of oneself and the identification with feminist discourses.
- Maintained an 9/10 (First class) average in each year.

Publications

2024 Forthcoming "Networks of mental health": Relational understandings of mental health discourse implication in Ecuadorian teenagers' networks. *Childhood*, 0(0).

2023 Published Impact of family and community cohesion on the support perceived by Ecuadorian teenagers. *Journal of child and family studies*. **31**(1), pp.337-352

2022 Book chapter Dispositivo Psicológicos de Orientación Psicoanalítica Dirigidos a lo Social, Egas, V (eds) *Psi virtual intervenciones psicológicas y virtualidad: Retos de la presencia-ausencia en tiempos de pandemia*. Quito pp. 17-55

Teaching and Research Experience

Oct 2023-present

Teaching Assistant. Psychological Approaches to Child Development and Education. School of Education, University of Leeds

- Delivered 2 seminars with 20 students about how to write a literature review and answer essays questions in an effective way.
- Prepared and delivered 2 lectures about learning differences and Special Education Needs and Contemporary applications of psychology in education.
- Marked 30 written works of 1500 words each.

Teaching Assistant. Research in Education. University of Leeds

- Provide individual writing feedback to 12 Master of Education Program students on their research proposal designs.

- Prepare group tutorials for 2 groups of 6 Master of Education Program students to review their oral presentations and provide feedback.
- Write reports with the identified issues found in the research proposals of the students and give suggestions to solve them.

February 2013 – December 2014

Research Assistant, Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, Health Department. Ecuador

- Managed a team of 10 volunteers to complete the field work of the Project Cero Waist sponsored by the University.
- Organised and prepared meetings with stakeholders, professors, universities to form networks that support the development of the project.
- Created a public library for the children of the neighbourhoods where this research took place.

Funding and awards

- **February 2024** Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) Award of £500 for activities focused on making research outputs accessible for diverse audiences and stakeholders.
- **May 2022** School of Education of the University of Leeds, Education and Social Justice Scholarship valued at £35,000 per year for three years.
- **July 2019** Chevening Scholarship to complete a MA in Childhood Studies at the University of Leeds valued at £45,000 for one year.

Activities and Achievements

- **May 2023- present** Co-organising the Postgraduate Student Seminar Series with staff members and fellow PhD students. University of Leeds.
- **November 2023** Moderator in the Showcase of Latin American Research, University of Leeds.
- **April 2020-February 2021** Founder and creator of the program Dibujar me da Alas “Drawing gives me Freedom” to give emotional support to children through art classes during the outbreak of the pandemic.

Career and Skills Development

- **January 2024** Social impact on Social Research Seminars, University of Leeds
- **August 2023** Participatory methodologies with young people in social research, University of Manchester.
- **July 2023** Ethics in social research with young and vulnerable populations seminars, University of Sheffield.
- **February 2023** Qualitative methods research and qualitative data analysis, University of Leeds.
- **December 2022** Social research epistemologies and methodologies seminars, University of Leeds.
- **December 2022** Statistics and Quantitative data research analysis course, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador.

Work Experience

- **September 2023- present** Peer Support Assistant at the Careers Centre at the University of Leeds.
- **October 2020-present** Online and face-to-face Clinical Psychologist for teenagers and young people. Independent work.
- **February 2021- March 2022** Clinical Psychologist at the Medical Centre KENZO S.A.

Conference Papers

- **September 2024** (Approved) Empirical studies on children and young people in everyday life: social, cultural, health and material diversity and inequality in children/young people's worlds, around the globe. Childlife 2024 Conference. Oslo Metropolitan University.
- **September 2024** (Approved) Wellbeing and mental health in Education. BERA Conference 2024 and WERA Focal Meeting. University of Manchester.
- **September 2023** Emotions: Relational phenomena that transform the world. VIII Research Colloquium. Emotions in the Social Sciences Framework: Multidisciplinary perspectives. Universidad Jesuita de Guadalajara, Mexico.
- **July 2023** Researcher or Researcher instrument: A twist in the identity of the researchers in participatory approaches. Messy Research: PGR Conference. University of Leeds.

Other Skills and Awards

- Proficient with: MS Office applications, MS Teams, SPSS, NVivo.
- Languages: Spanish (native speaker) English (C1) French (B1)

References

Available on request.

Cover Letter Template

Your Address
Postcode Date

Employer Name
Employer Address
Employer Postcode

(No need to add addresses if you are sending your cover letter as part of an online application form, rather than as a separate attachment)

Dear (named individual or 'Dear Recruitment Team/Hiring Manager')

Re: Title of job, as advertised

Paragraph 1

Introduce yourself and why you are writing. Make it clear which position you are applying for and where you saw the advertisement.

Paragraph 2

This paragraph is a summary of why you are a suitable candidate for the role and why you are interested in the job. Pick highlights from your CV which illustrate the relevant skills and experience you have for the role, referring to the essential and desirable criteria on the job description. Emphasise what you can do for the company, rather than what they can do for you. Keep language active rather than passive, e.g. rather than 'this role allowed me to develop', say 'during this role I developed...'

Paragraph 3

Why do you want to work for this specific company? Show your research - what are the company values and how do they align with your own? What projects / developments are they working on which excite you? Do they work with clients who interest you? Have you met / talked to anyone from the company e.g. at a fair or via LinkedIn? It is worth mentioning this and use it to support/explain your interest in the organisation.

Paragraph 4

This is a positive conclusion to your cover letter. This could be a summary of the knowledge, skills and experience you can bring to the role, thanking them for considering your application, that you hope to gain the chance to discuss it with them at interview, and that you look forward to hearing from them.

Yours sincerely or faithfully, (sincerely if addressing a named individual, faithfully if using Dear Recruitment Team/Hiring Manager)

Your name

Example of a cover letter (1)

58 Green Street
Leeds
LS36 9LP
3rd August 2022

Ms H Holger (Head of Admissions)
University of Leeds, LS65 9JT

Dear Ms Holger,

I am writing to apply for the position of Contextual Admissions Administrator at the University of Leeds, as advertised on your website. I have recently completed a BA in Modern History, graduating with a 2:1. Throughout my studies, I worked part-time as a Student Ambassador for the University, which confirmed my desire to find a permanent role within higher education.

In my Student Ambassador role, I developed strong interpersonal skills through interacting with prospective students and their families on a regular basis. For many of these students, I was their first point of contact with the University, which highlighted to me the importance of appearing professional, but also friendly and approachable. One of my strengths is being able to develop an easy rapport with a diverse range of people, a skill I also demonstrated when previously employed at a busy restaurant chain in Manchester, meeting and greeting customers. I further enhanced my communication skills through creating and delivering presentations as part of my degree course, ensuring that both the content and style of delivery were appropriate to the audience.

I also possess excellent organisational and time management skills. During my degree, I worked on several assignments simultaneously whilst also working part-time. To ensure that I met all deadlines I produced a timetable, allocating time to each assignment and prioritising those with earlier due dates. Whilst on my placement year in a busy office environment at Leeds City Council I also used my Outlook calendar to manage my time effectively by setting up task lists and reminders, as well as creating sub-folders in my inbox to file my emails, making messages requiring follow-up easier to access.

I am particularly excited by the prospect of working at the University of Leeds due to its focus on widening participation through the Access to Leeds and Raising Opportunities schemes. Helping students from all backgrounds to gain access to higher education is a strong motivation for me; I was the first member of my family to go to university and am very keen to encourage and assist others in a similar situation. I would greatly appreciate the chance to join the Admissions Team and be involved in delivering this important service.

I am available for interview at your convenience and would welcome the opportunity to meet you to discuss my application further.

Yours sincerely,

Nial Ireli

Example of a cover letter (2)

16, West Road
Leeds LS83 4RR

25th November 2023

Morgan Stanley
London N7776

Dear Recruitment Team,

I am a second-year Economics student, writing to apply for the Corporate Treasury Industrial Placement, which I learned of at the Morgan Stanley Company Presentation at the University of Leeds. The Treasury function is at the heart of the bank: it manages the bank's risk exposure and financial wellbeing, resulting in work that is high impact and meaningful. Furthermore, the role would provide me with a broader understanding of the bank, as it demands interaction with many business units. This appeals to me because it presents more learning opportunities.

I have excellent communication, time management and problem-solving skills as well as being a strong team player. While working as a Pharmacy Assistant I developed my verbal communication skills by simplifying complex medical knowledge for customers. Moreover, at university, I developed written communication skills through my coursework assignments, critically evaluating existing literature, and identifying then summarising the most useful information. This resulted in many clear concise essays where I received a first. As a result, I am confident that I could analyse data or complex business problems to that effect.

In addition, I also developed my time management skills as a Pharmacy Assistant, where I juggled answering calls and the clinic diary with responding to emails and assisting in other departments. It was a fast-paced environment and usually all phone lines were busy; I subsequently learnt how to prioritise calls and resolve complaints quickly. Working at Morgan Stanley, I will likely be working on multiple projects at once, so identifying effective ways of approaching tasks will ensure that I meet all deadlines.

Furthermore, I am also a strong team player. Earlier this year I was part of a team of five students tasked with creating and delivering a CSR presentation. I suggested a structure for our initial discussion and later a project timeline. I took the lead on creating a PowerPoint presentation, asking my colleagues to send me a summary of what they wanted to be included on their slides. I also suggested that we practised the presentation to give each other feedback. As a result, our presentation ran smoothly and was praised for its seamless transitions.

I became interested in Morgan Stanley after learning more about the international, collaborative and open work culture at the company presentation. I also regularly listen to your 'Thoughts on the Market' podcast, through which I have gained invaluable insights into the banking sector. I resonate with the bank's core values of doing the right thing, putting clients first, leading with exceptional ideas and giving back. I really believe the bank is looking to make a positive impact, whether it be from global volunteer month, committing to sustainable investing with the impact quotient tool, or gender equality through the Women in Finance Charter. Morgan Stanley holds a unique place in the industry by being the best at what it does, increasing its impact through leading the way for sustainable investment.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my application. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Priya Agarwal