

**Gwasanaeth Gyrfaedd a Chyflogadwyedd
Careers & Employability Service**

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CVs & COVERING LETTERS

CV = Curriculum Vitae = Story of Your Life

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INTRODUCTION

Your CV needs to be a powerful marketing document which aims to market you to a prospective employer. It is important to realise that the purpose of a CV is not to get a job, but to get an INTERVIEW.

Whilst there are certain rules to be followed, every CV is different because it reflects an individual. If you send out CV's to different employers, then each CV should be adapted and tailored to the organisation and the vacancy you are applying for. The secret is to make your CV stand out from the crowd so thorough preparation is essential if you want your CV to be effective.

CREATING YOUR CV

Writing a CV gives you the freedom to choose what format to use and what information to include. The main message you will be trying to get across is 'I can do this job', so it is up to you to select the bits of information about you (skills, competencies and characteristics) to persuade the employer to interview you.

Aim to ensure that the content of your CV matches the needs of the organisation you are applying to. It should highlight your education, academic history, skills and any work experience you may have, using evidence to demonstrate that you can provide the skills the company needs.

You can find out what the company is looking for by researching the employer and looking closely at the job description and person specification if there is one. Remember, you will need to adapt the information on your CV for each job you apply for.

A good CV will:

- Be crisp and concise
- Be appropriate to your situation
- Look attractive and appealing to the eye
- Be no longer than two pages

CHOOSING A CV FORMAT

There is no set CV format but it is important you choose a style which you feel comfortable with and which you feel will work for you. Basically there are two main types of CV:

- **Chronological** – an historical account of your career path so far which lists information in reverse chronological order (most recent activity first). This is the form most students/graduates start off with and usually works for most situations.
- **Functional/skills based** – places emphasis on your skills and strengths which demonstrate how you can meet the requirements of the employer. Particularly useful if you have been working for a few years or wish to change career direction.

There are examples of these CV formats at the back of this handout.

CV LAYOUT

Your CV should normally include the following:

- Your name and personal details at the top of the first page (you do not have to put your date of birth)
- Personal Profile or Career Objective (Optional)
- Education
- Employment and work experience
- Skills and interests
- Other information if relevant
- References

Very important:

- If writing a chronological CV put your activities in reverse chronological order
- Perfect spelling and grammar (remember that using spell-check is not always reliable as it is often in American-English)
- Consistent, logical and easy-to-read layout
- One font style is enough
- Use **bold** for headings
- Make statements – bullet points are most effective
- Avoid over-using the word 'I'
- Use action/power words at the beginning of each statement
- Do not be afraid of white space

Do NOT include:

- The words Curriculum Vitae
- Photographs
- Job descriptions
- Non-essential personal information
- Long sentences

You should prioritise relevant points and use words which reflect the type of job you are looking for. Do not worry if you do not have any relevant work experience - you can feature university, extra-curricular experiences, or projects if they support your objective. A size 11 font generally works well perhaps using Ariel or Tahoma.

Some Action/power Words:

Achieved	Administered	Advised	Analysed
Assessed	Arranged	Budgeted	Calculated
Completed	Conducted	Controlled	Co-ordinated
Created	Designed	Devised	Developed
Discovered	Distributed	Evaluated	Examined
Explained	Increased	Instructed	Liaised
Managed	Monitored	Negotiated	Organised
Planned	Promoted	Recommended	Reformed
Represented	Researched	Responsible for	Resulted
Selected	Sold	Solved	Supervised
Taught	Tested	Trained	Welcomed

Personal Details

Include your name, address, telephone number and your email address. Write your name in bold and in a larger font, perhaps using size 12 or 14 font: it is you who is being marketed and you want the employer to notice and remember your name. It is recommended you write your name in the centre or the right hand side of the page for more impact.

Profile or Objective (Optional)

If you decide to include a Profile or an Objective, keep it short and geared towards the type of work for which you are applying. Some examples can be found at www.prospects.ac.uk/cvs.htm.

Education

This section can do more than just list your educational achievements. You can highlight units, modules and projects from your degree course which are relevant to the job you are applying for. It is useful to promote your final year project as it provides evidence of project management skills – a competence highly regarded by employers.

Include your 'A' levels with grades but it is a good idea but avoid a long list of GCSE's. A summary is better, e.g. 11 GCSEs (A* - B) including English (A) and Maths (A).

Employment/work experience

This is one section of your CV which raises more questions at interview, e.g. "Tell us more about your work with . . . ?" Give dates when you worked there but there is no need for days and months (e.g. *September 2008 – July 2009* or *Summer 2009*). Include any voluntary work and other work experience. Be careful not to write a job description but write about what you achieved in that job starting each entry with an action/power word (see list above).

Skills

For a Chronological CV, you may wish to summarise your key skills, e.g. languages (and the level attained) and IT (state a qualification if you have one, familiarity with software, databases and word processing packages). Have you any familiarity with scientific or technical equipment? Do you have a driving licence?

Go to http://www.prospects.ac.uk/assets/documents/CV_skills_2010.pdf to see an example of how to present skills in a skills-based CV.

Interests

Mention your extra-curricular activities. Perhaps you have been in a sports team or taken a leading role in a club or society. Employers are keen to recruit individuals who can socialise with colleagues (a team player). Don't just produce a list of activities – choose a few and say how you are involved. Make it interesting!

Referees

Before you use anyone's name, you should have already asked them for their permission to do so. Your referees should be able to provide an effective reference on your behalf. One referee should be an academic one – perhaps your tutor or dissertation supervisor. Add full

contact details including email address and telephone number. If you haven't enough space it is fine to write 'References are available on request'.

CHECKLIST

- First impressions matter – is your CV clear and concise and easy to read?
- Do not cram too much information on the page. Think of your reader!
- Prioritise your information and use words which make you sound proactive and positive
- Does your CV highlight your skills and achievements?
- Look at what you have written from the employer's perspective
- Check for perfect spelling and grammar
- Do not use abbreviations – you should write the words out in full the first time and then put the acronym in brackets. From then on, use the acronym
- Get someone, perhaps a careers adviser, to look over your draft
- Keep a copy

COVERING LETTERS

A CV should never be sent without a covering letter. It is the introduction to your CV and is more personal than the formal document it is introducing. You can write it to project an air of enthusiasm, particularly in demonstrating your understanding of the company's goals and how you would like to contribute to the ongoing success of their organisation.

A good covering letter will give you the edge over other applicants and should make the reader want to find out more about you. It serves a different need to the CV in that you can state why you want to work for them, opening the door for further communication.

DO's

- Be creative – the opening sentence should grab your potential employer's attention
- Write as though you are talking to the reader – be natural
- Use business letter format
- Refer to your CV but do not repeat it
- Address it to an individual, perhaps the head of the department where you want to work – especially if you are writing a speculative application.
- Keep it brief – four SHORT paragraphs at the most

DON'T's

- Repeat what is in your CV
- Send it to a department or to 'Dear Sir or Madam' unless you are responding to a specific job vacancy
- Make your letter sound like you have sent it to several employers – try to personalise it to that particular employer
- Write too much – one side of A4 only. Less is more.
- Be boring

SUGGESTED LAYOUT

Keep your letter to no more than four paragraphs:

- First paragraph - what job you are applying for and why (about them)
- Second paragraph - why you should work for them (about you)
- Third paragraph - what you can do for them (more about you)
- Fourth paragraph - proactive conclusion

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Downloadable job-seeking skills handouts are available from our website:
www.bangor.ac.uk/careers

The following reference books are available in our Careers Resource Room:

Brilliant CV – Jim Bright & Joanne Earl
The Global Resumé and CV Guide – Mary Anne Thompson
Ultimate Cover Letters – Martin Yate

Also visit:

www.prospects.ac.uk/cvs/htm
www.prospects.ac.uk/job_application_advice.htm
www.gowales.co.uk
www.get.hobsons.co.uk
<http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/cvquestions.htm>

August 2010

AMY ROBERTS

14 St David's Avenue, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 4PJ
Tel: 01248 669947 Mobile: 077631 454990 Email:ajones@yahoo.com

OBJECTIVE: to obtain a place on the Kraft Finance Graduate Training Scheme

EDUCATION:

2007 - 2010

Bangor University

BA Hons (2i) Business Studies & Finance

Optional modules studied:

- Financial Analysis
- Advanced Corporate Finance
- Marketing Strategy and Management
- Human Resource Management

Final Year Project

'Financial Forecast & Analysis of the Marketing of American Bakery Products in Wales'

2000 - 2007

Ysgol Tryfan, Bangor

'A' levels - Business A, Mathematics B, History B

GCSE's - 10 subjects A-C including Mathematics A, French A, English A, History A

EMPLOYMENT:

July 2009 – present

Finance Direct, Bangor

Financial Assistant

- Deal directly with customer enquiries on the telephone
- Advise customers on a range of financial products
- Arrange meetings between financial advisors and customers
- Enter confidential information on to database
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Summer 2008

Tesco, Bangor

Customer Services Assistant

- Advised customers while working on the Customer Service Desk
- Assisted customers in finding products
- Received training in team leadership

Autumn Term 2007

Barclays Bank, Chester

Trainee (work experience as part of degree course)

- Analysed customer data
- Solved business client problems
- Promoted bank services to customers in the bank and responded to telephone queries

SKILLS:

IT and computing:	Microsoft Office – Word, Excel, Access Peachtree accounting package Dreamweaver web package
Languages:	Welsh – first language English – fluent German – basic
Other skills:	Driving licence – full clean

INTERESTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

Students' Union:	Treasurer <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Managed budget of £10,000▪ Negotiated sponsorship from local businesses▪ Contributed to 15% increase in membership
Sport:	Captain University Netball team PADI qualified diver
Music:	Bass guitarist for 'The Squirrels' Piano grade 5

Referees

Dr Don Smith
Finance Direct
King Street
Chester CH3 5KJ
Email: dsmith@fd.co.uk

Mrs G Williams
Lecturer in Business Studies (Tutor)
Bangor University
Gwynedd LL57 2DG
Email: gillwilliams@bangor.ac.uk

(Cover letter for Amy Roberts)

14 St David's Avenue
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 4PJ

July 30th, 2010

Mr John Irving
Director of Training
Kraft Foods Ltd
Bayshill Road
Cheltenham
GL50 3AE

Dear Mr Irving

I am writing to apply for a place on your Graduate Training Scheme (Finance). Previous graduates that I have spoken to who have joined this scheme from Bangor University consider it to be the best in the UK, and I would welcome the opportunity to be a contributor to the ongoing success of Kraft Foods.

As you can see from my enclosed CV, the modules I studied at Bangor University match both my career interests and your needs. Throughout my time as a student I have endeavoured to gain as much work experience as possible, and preferably in an environment which gave me an opportunity to develop not only my knowledge of finance, but also of working in a team and with the general public.

My final year project, sponsored by 'Mrs Beeton Foods USA, was focused on the 'Financial Forecast and Analysis of the Marketing of American Bakery Products in Wales', earned me a 2:1 grade. The project involved making presentations to company representatives on the possibility of producing and marketing their products in North Wales, and included my research of costing and profit outcomes. I worked in a highly motivated manner, was able to liaise between the company and local shop keepers and hoteliers through the medium of Welsh as well as English. This proved to be my most enjoyable and successful time at university.

I hope you will consider my application: I have attached my CV as requested. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Amy Roberts

Enc: CV

DAVID OWEN

17 Holyhead Road

Menai Bridge

Bangor, LL56 5EQ

Tel: 01248 4419765 Mobile: 0776620 635229

Email: dowen89@hotmail.com

Career Objective: To work in Marketing with Draig Technology

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Business & Finance postgraduate with strong interpersonal and communication skills

Highly effective in creating and developing customer networks

Enthusiastic and committed

Excellent IT skills

Fluent Welsh speaker

Customer Management

- Passionate about consumers
- Experienced at developing customer relationships
- Organised market research into new brands
- Liaised with the sales team
- Developed new strategies

Marketing Special Events

- Organised and attended trade exhibitions
- Responsibility for liaison with advertisers
- Planned launch events of new products
- Regional marketing responsibility in North Wales

Promotion

- Responsible for writing marketing and promotional briefs
- Presented promotion plans to colleagues and buyers
- Prepared press releases and photo shoots
- Arranged household leaflet drops

Finance and Administration

- Contributed to the formulation and implementation of the annual marketing plan
- Analysed pricing positions
- Scheduled resources to meet objectives
- Compiled and distributed financial and statistical information

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Project Manager	Annual Brynfest	2006 – 2009
Marketing Trainee	Chester Racecourse	Summer 2009
Customer Services	Bangor Information Systems	2006 – 2007

VOLUNTEERING

i-to-i	Volunteer Costa Rica 12 week placement in Montezuma	Summer 2007
Do-it Volunteering	Events Supporter, Asthma UK	2005 - 2006

EDUCATION

Bangor University	MA Business & Finance	2009 – 2010
Bangor University	BA (Hons) 2i Business Studies With Marketing	2006 – 2009

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

RSA (Cambridge) Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language	Spring 2007
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FURTHER INFORMATION

Member Chartered Institute of Marketing (Bangor Student Branch)
Web designer, Eisteddfod Gadeiriol Dyffryn Ogwen, using Dreamweaver
Member of the Spanish Club, BU
Fluent in Welsh and Spanish
Experienced in Microsoft Office and marketing software packages
Full Clean driving licence

REFERENCES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

(Cover letter for David Owen)

17 Holyhead Road
Menai Bridge
Bangor
LL56 5EQ

July 30th 2010

Ms Helen Holloway
Director of Marketing
Draig Technology
Bangor
LL57 14PJ

Dear Ms Holloway

I have noted in the press that Draig Technology is enjoying a period of unprecedented expansion with a subsequent surge in business with a view to expanding sales of your products into Spain. When I met with your colleague George Simons recently, he suggested I should write to you.

As you can see from my CV, whilst I was a student I worked in a wide-range of environments which not only confirmed my enthusiasm for marketing and promotion, but also developed my confidence in dealing with people. Not only have I worked in for organisations where I created websites in English and Welsh, but I also had the exciting opportunity to liaise with a Spanish agent when negotiating for Spanish singers to attend the annual Brynffest. I have also worked in South America which further improved my spoken Spanish.

I hope you will consider my application for employment with Draig. I will telephone you next week to discuss this further and arrange a possible meeting. Thank you for taking the time to consider my CV which is attached.

Yours sincerely

David Owen
Enc: CV