



Maximizing the internship experience for everyone

CV Introduction



CV

Why should I write a CV?

The aim of your CV is to show any prospective employers that you have the relevant education, expertise and experience that they are looking for. This booklet will help you to make the most of your CV and hopefully increase your chances of getting your dream job!

While the aim for all CVs remain the same, the formats of CVs can be very different. Below are some of the most commonly used formats used.

CV STYLES

EuroPass CV

CVs can vary in format and content from country to country. This can make job searching outside of your own country quite difficult. In order to aid the mobility of citizens throughout Europe, the EU Commission sanctioned a suite of documents called 'Europass', which are considered the EU standard as regards CV and other job searching tools. Europass CV can be created online using the template or by using the samples and instructions, both available in a variety of languages.

<https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/home>

Chronological CV

This type of CV outlines education, work history and interests in reverse order to that in which they occurred. When providing details of your educational or work experience, you start with your most recent experience and work backwards. The reason for this is to show your most recent achievements. A chronological CV is easy to organise, shows career progression and is the most commonly used CV format.

Skills based CV

Throughout your professional and educational career, you acquire skills which can be transferred from one role or company to the next. This is true even if the new or prospective role, company or even industry seems very different or completely unrelated to the previous roles, companies or industries in which you have worked. The advantage of a skills based CV over other traditional formats is that it allows you the opportunity to highlight those skills you have developed in various areas of your life, which are relevant or appropriate to the role or career you are now trying to get into.

See Annex for samples of all CVs

CV Headings

Regardless of which format you choose to use for your CV, some universal guidelines should be applied when filling in the detail of your CV. Before and whilst writing your CV, keep the job spec for which you are applying close to hand and refer to it often. Think of it like a 'check list' for the employer; the more boxes you tick, the more likely it is that you will be invited for an interview. Your job is to show them that you meet some, most or all of their requirements in as clear and obvious way as possible, thus making it very easy for them to put you into the 'Yes' pile. Bear this in mind whilst putting your CV together.

CV's should include the following headings:

1. Personal Details

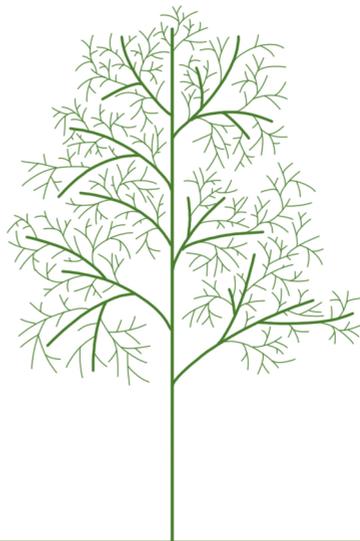
(Name, Address, Contact number, Email address, LinkedIn address)

In addition to your Personal Details, you may choose to include a photograph of yourself at the top of your CV. There is no definitive answer as to whether or not you should include a photograph, rather this is entirely a matter of personal preference. However you should bear in mind the cultural context in which you live and are job searching. For example in many European countries such as France, Germany and Denmark a photograph is considered as standard. In Ireland, the UK and U.S. photographs are rarely, if ever used. If you do choose to include to a photograph ensure it is recent, includes just your head and shoulders and you are professionally presented and dressed.

2. Personal Profile

Your CV is designed to do one thing: to get you an interview. Yet the average recruiter will only spend 20 to 30 seconds glancing at your CV which means that you need to make an instant impression.

Your personal statement provides the ideal opportunity to do just that. Its aim is to highlight your professional attributes and goal, emphasising experience and key skills relevant to the role for which you are applying. Aim to use no more than 50 words, making each sentence a key selling point.



To help you write your personal profile, it is recommended that you use the '3 D's' method.

a) Define Yourself

What is your background? What sector have you experience in? (Construction, Retail, Motor Trade, Manufacturing, Printing, Medical Devices, Hospitality etc.)

b) Difference

What makes you different? What is YOUR specific skill set? What are your qualities?

Skills: Things you have learned how to do, for example: PC maintenance, use particular accounting software, use a computerised cash register etc.

Qualities: Your personality e.g. a people person, patient, empathetic, honest, direct, calm, etc.

c) Direction

What type of job are you looking for? If you are changing career direction, use this as an opportunity to explain this i.e. "I previously worked in the hospitality industry but upon discovering a passion and aptitude for IT I have recently gone back to college to retrain as an IT technician" etc. If this is your first role, highlight your interest and aptitude for this area and show how this is the definite direction in which you see yourself headed.

3. Key Skills

Listing your key skills at the start of your CV is another way of impressing on the employer that you have the skills and attributes that they are looking for. List your 'key skills' in a bullet pointed list, ensuring that the most relevant skills are highlighted. Remember, the job spec is a check list so use this section to tick as many boxes as possible.

Key skills are made up of technical/job related skills as well as transferable skills.

Job related/technical skills

Using specific examples can really help to emphasise your experience and use of your technical skills, for example:

- Competent JAVA programmer – created a piece of software to simplify my employer's stock taking process.
- C#, C++ - designed an app to gather news and photos from my hometown to keep my friend living abroad up-to-date on important events.
- People Management – most recently managing a team of 14 Advisers within a contact centre environment. My team has consistently hit monthly targets of 80% for the last 6 months.

Don't just write a long list of your abilities - prove them.

Transferrable Skills

These are skills learnt in one field of work that can be easily adapted for use in another. These skills can be acquired in work, college or school or whilst taking part in hobbies etc. Many of these skills are learnt unbeknownst to us so you may need to sit down and think about tasks that you've done and the skills you've learnt from them.

Some skills that employers look for in prospective employees are:

Communication Initiative
 Teamwork Problem solving
 Computer skills Interpersonal Technical skills

Similar to Job related/technical skills, if you have examples of how you learnt or utilise these skills then list these also. For example:

Excellent communication skills demonstrated during my work experience in O'Brien Solicitors where I was responsible for taking meeting minutes and all forms of written correspondence.

4. Education & Training History

See sample CVs for layout and information that should be included. Don't be afraid to list courses and qualifications you completed some time ago or those that seem irrelevant. All forms of education are valuable and show that you have the initiative, determination and self-discipline it takes to see a project through to completion. However be sure to give the appropriate space to each course / qualification, depending on the role. For example if you are applying for a marketing role and you have done a course in Business and Marketing, be sure to list all modules and highlight anything particularly relevant – a high grade in a marketing module for example. For less role relevant qualifications, it is enough to list the name of the course, the dates and place where you completed it.

5. Work History

Include dates, employer details (name and address, even if no longer operating), your role and responsibilities and skills acquired. Highlight any outstanding achievements or awards. For example 'Head hunted by the HR department to lead a recruitment project' or 'Promoted from Administration Assistant to Senior Administrator after 6 months in the company'.

Remember you will need to alter your CV according to each role you apply for. One of the main areas that will change is your 'Work History' which you will amend to make your experience as relevant as possible. Of course you cannot alter for whom you worked and for how long, but you can edit your role and responsibilities within those companies without the need to fabricate. For example if you are going for a managerial position you should emphasize that your previous jobs entailed considerable responsibility including decision making duties. Draw focus to a specific project that

encompassed many of the skills you know to be important attributes for a manager to possess - delegation, meeting deadlines, consistency, teamwork etc. Describe your role in the project, your actions and the resultant positive consequences for the company, use quantitative reference if possible.

If you are applying for a sales position highlight your powers of persuasion with reference to your achieved monthly targets, name drop prestigious clients and include details of how much you earned for your last company. Your potential employer wants a sales person who gets results.

To summarise: think of what the job you are applying for entails and what the employer wants from the successful candidate to do that job. Then highlight areas or projects from your previous positions or experience in college or training that required you to use those desired skills, emphasizing how successful you were at achieving results. Remember you want to make it as easy as possible for the employer to put YOUR CV in the 'yes' pile!

6. Interests

These include hobbies or other things you do outside of your work life. Give specific details rather than one word lists. For example, rather than writing "football" write "I am captain of my local football team 'Red Lions United' and have played with the club for the last 6 years". Likewise, rather than "IT", you could expand by saying "I have a keen interest in IT and regularly mend and update PCs and laptops for friends and family" etc. Remember, give details but don't lie or over embellish as you may be caught out if you are asked about your hobby in your interview!

7. Achievements (Optional)

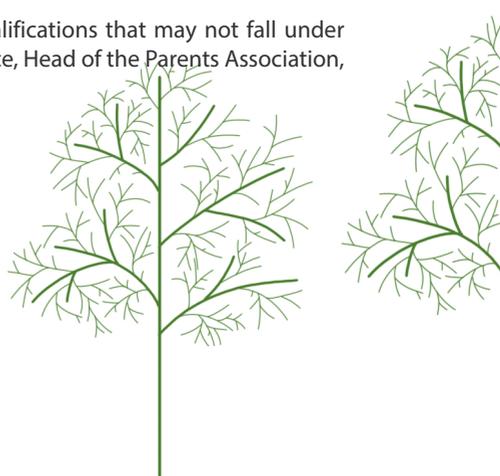
This is an optional section where you can include achievements you are particularly proud of or which are relevant to the role you are applying for e.g. Man of the Match, Annual participant in the Flora Mini Marathon, etc.

8. Additional information (Optional)

Here you might include any other awards or qualifications that may not fall under 'Training & Education' e.g. Full Clean Drivers Licence, Head of the Parents Association, Safe Pass certificate, First Aid qualification, etc.

9. Referees

It is recommended that you put "Available on request" rather than list a referee's full contact details. Always asks a referee's permission before you use their name. It is a good idea to send them a copy of your CV and a description of the job you have applied for so they can tailor their appraisal of you to match the requirements of the role.



Key Points to Remember

- NB: Tailor your CV to every job you apply for. There is no 'one size fits all' when it comes to Cvs.
- Match your experience, skills, knowledge and personal qualities to the type of person the employer is looking for in the job spec. Highlight any particularly relevant information in your CV.
- Try to use the same language as the employer.
- Before sending make sure to proof read it (or get someone else to) to ensure there are no misspellings, grammar errors etc.
- Use consistent formatting. Ensure you have used the same font style, size, bullets, tabs etc. throughout your CV and Cover Letter. Recommended fonts include Ariel, Tahoma, Veranda, Calibri.
- Your CV should: be visually appealing, easy to read with lots of white space and it should be concise, clear, and consistent. It should be no more than two pages long and should read well on paper as well as on screen as many employers will receive your CV via email.

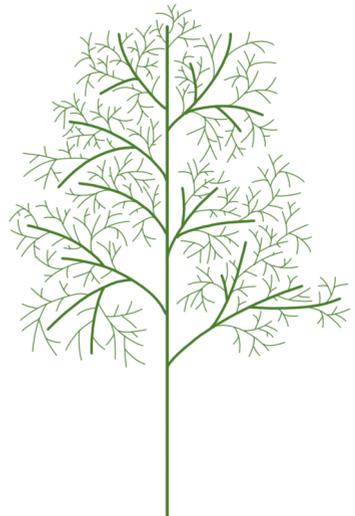
Just Starting Your Career?

So you sit down to write your CV but you find that with no previous work experience, you have nothing to write... This doesn't have to be the case.

Everybody starts their career with little or no work experience so don't be disheartened.

Firstly, write about each part-time job, work experience or internship you've done as a proper, professional role. List your role, responsibilities and highlight any relevant transferable skills that you learnt. Likewise expand on any significant projects completed as part of your studies. These can then be used during the interview to demonstrate communication skills, team work, ability to work to deadlines etc. Finally, look to your extracurricular activities to pad out your CV. Expand on your hobbies and interests and mention clubs etc. that you are involved in, highlighting any significant roles or achievements attained through these.

You are only at the start of your career so no one expects you have loads of qualifications and years of experience!



COVER LETTERS

Why should I write a Cover Letter?

A cover letter is an essential part of your job application. It serves as an introduction to your CV. The cover letter is a separate document which explains why you are applying for the job and it highlights the relevant skills and experience you have for the role in a clear and succinct way. A good cover letter should capture the attention of the employer and persuade her/him to look at your CV.

Cover Letter Format An effective cover letter should be no more than three or four paragraphs in total.

Paragraph 1: Tell them why you are writing - also mention where you heard about the job vacancy.

Example: *I am writing in response to your job advert posted on the 26th November 2011 on www.irishjobs.ie for the position of...*

Paragraph 2: Say why you want to work for this particular organisation and why you are a suitable candidate for the role. Convince them that you WANT the job.

Example: *I first became interested in retail during a work experience placement in Tesco, where I learned valuable customer service skills in addition to cash handling, till operation, stock control and floor assessment. I have always been a people person and as a keen shopper myself I feel passionate about good customer service. I am hardworking, reliable and resourceful and I feel my customer service and cash handling experience will be beneficial to O'Brien's Catering.*

Paragraph 3: Demonstrate that you have researched the company.

Example: *I am particularly interested in a career with O'Brien Catering because of your excellent reputation in quality and customer service. I see that you have recently won a National Irish Food Award for your produce. You have a strong commitment to sourcing Irish produce which really appeals to me especially in this current economic climate.*

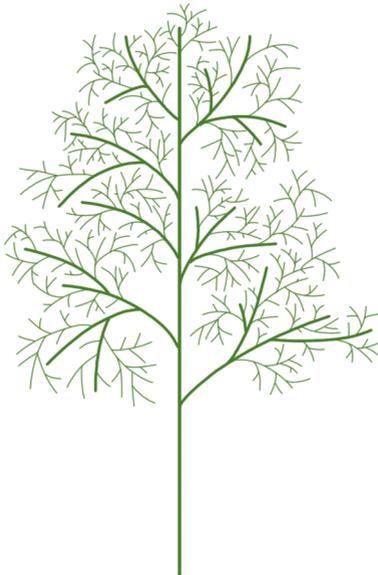
Paragraph 4: Give details of you availability for interview. You might also indicate that you are interested in alternative roles in the company should they become available.

I enclose my Curriculum Vitae for your attention and I welcome the opportunity to discuss this position further. I am available for interview any time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Don't forget to sign the letter. Keep a copy of your, cover letter and the job spec / advert together in a safe place to refer back to for interview. Keep a note of the date that you have applied for the job and make a polite follow-up by telephone or email if no reply is received after two weeks.

Tips for your Cover Letter

- Use one side of an A4 page only and three or four paragraphs at most.
- Show that you have researched the company by mentioning a product or service that the company offers and how it relates to your skills/interests.
- Find out the name of the recruiter and address the letter directly to them.
- State clearly what the vacancy is and where you heard about it.
- Be consistent with the information in your CV.
- Indicate availability for interview.
- Follow the same style, font etc. as your CV.
- Check for correct spelling and grammar.



LETTER EXAMPLE 1 JOB/INTERNSHIP APPLICATION

John Murphy
11, Bray Main St. Bray
Co. Wicklow

4th July 2014

Mr. Gerry Murphy
Human Resources Manager
Dell Computers
Loughlinstown
Co. Dublin

Dear Mr. Murphy

Introduction

Please find attached my Curriculum Vitae for the position of xxxx with xxxxxx as advertised on www.irishjobs.ie on the 1st May 2014.

Demonstrate how your skills match the Job Description.

I believe I have the relevant skills and qualities required to excel in this role. . . .

Include short paragraph that highlights your qualifications / experience / achievements

- Demonstrate that you know enough about the position by relating your experiences to the position and the Company values.
- Mention specific qualifications / achievements which make you a good candidate for the position.

During my recent course in xxxxx I have developed additional skills in xxxxx (*List course content and skills acquired relevant to the job*)

I feel that I would be able to make a significant contribution to xxxx team because xxxx

Demonstrate that you have researched the company

In addition to what I can offer as a potential candidate, your company appeals to me for a number of reasons. . . / I am particularly drawn to your company because. . . (*List at least 3 reasons – match your skills and qualities to the reasons you want to work for them*).

Closing

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am available immediately for an interview and I look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours sincerely

Your Name
Your Telephone Number

LETTER EXAMPLE 2 – DIRECT APPLICATION TO COMPANY – NO JOB ADVERTISED

4th July 2014

Brian Murphy
32, Blarney Road
Crumlin, Dublin 12

Ms. Alice Smith
Chief Technical Officer
IT City Solutions Ltd.
Walkinstown, Dublin 12

Dear Ms. Smith

Opening Paragraph

I hope you don't mind me taking the opportunity to contact you. I have been forwarded your contact details by xxxxx.

(Include short paragraph that highlights your qualifications / experience etc. Demonstrate that you know about the company by relating your experiences and skills to the company values/objectives/aims and mission statement (research a variety of roles at the company, look for common language used, research the company values and mission statement – What type of person are they looking for? Check their website and LinkedIn, research, research, research...)

2nd Paragraph

As you will see from my CV I have many of the skills and qualities that I feel would make a good fit with... (Company Name). I am specifically interested in the area of.....

My recent training and work experience has enhanced my skills in *(Mention specific qualifications and skills that match the job you would like. Research similar roles with other companies if this company has no current roles advertised).*

For example, during my course I have had the opportunity to work on xxxx and develop/design/create/analyse/project manage xxxxx.

In addition, I also implemented / revised / updated...

Although I do not have hands on experience in the area of xxxxx, I have been responsible for xxxxx in previous roles.

3rd Paragraph

Your company appeals to me for a number of reasons... / I am particularly drawn to your company because... *(List at least 3 reasons – match your skills and qualities to the reasons you want to work for them).*

4th Paragraph

I have attached a copy of my CV and I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you over a coffee to benefit from any advice you may be able to offer me in terms of my career objectives in this sector.

Yours sincerely

Your Name

Annex 1 – Sample Cvs

Chronological CV

PAUL SMITH

22 Springfield, Northstrand Road, Clontarf, Dublin 3.

Tel: 087 947 9384 / Email: paul.smith@gmail.com

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/pub/paul-smith1

PERSONAL PROFILE

Over 10 years' experience in a customer focused environment where I developed excellent communication and customer service skills, progressing to a Team Lead position. Confident and competent in the use of IT Software, Systems and Principles including Project Management. I am now keen to demonstrate my technical problem solving ability in the ICT sector where I can continue to develop new skills whilst building on my existing experience and recent training.

KEY SKILLS

- Computer Skills: CSS, HTML, PEARL, Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, Java.
- Operating Systems: Windows 7, Windows 8, Windows Vista, UNIX.
- Excellent Customer Service and Communication Skills.
- Technical Problem Solving ability and Leadership Skills.
- Languages: Fluent Spanish, Basic French.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2014 – Present	Coláiste Íde College of Further Education, Cardiffsbridge Road, Finglas West, Dublin 11. FIT PC Maintenance & Servicing FETAC 5
Modules:	CompTIA A+, Internet Web Security & Protection, JAVA, ECDL, Customer Service & Communications. Awaiting Results
2013	FÁS On-Line Learning ECDL
2012	FÁS, Ballyfermot Training Centre, Dublin 10 Security PSA Licence
1990 -1996	St. Breda's, Main Street, Fairview, Dublin 3. Leaving Certificate

WORK EXPERIENCE

2011-2014 During this time, whilst looking for full-time employment I attended courses in ICT and Security Training. I have also been involved in a number of community projects including fundraising for the local under 12's soccer club which I coach two evenings a week. I discovered an on-going interest in ICT and have recently embarked on a training programme in order to further up-skill in this area. It is my hope to return to full time employment on completion of the

Jan. 2000 -Dec. 2011 Conduit, Operation Centre,
East Point Business Park, Dublin 3.

Conduit designs, develops and delivers customer contact management solutions for numerous stages of the customer lifecycle.

Position: Team Leader
(Jan. 2005 – Dec. 2010)

- Induction and training of new staff.
- Supervision and delegation of tasks to the team.
- Introduced time saving initiatives that reduced routine data entry from 20 to 10 hours on a weekly basis.
- Developed a good relationship with customers and suppliers and customer orders increased by 10% year on year.
- Prepared weekly reports for Operations Meetings.

Position: Customer Service Agent
(Jan. 2002 – Dec. 2004)

- Assisted customers with product selection.
- Point of contact for customer complaints and queries.
- Handled customer financial details.

Position: Data Entry Operative
(Jan. 2000 – Dec. 2001)

- Entered customer details accurately on in house database.
- Maintained up to date customer files.
- Worked as part of a team to reach monthly targets.

June 1998 – Dec. 1999 Xtra-Vision Ltd., Greenhills Retail Park,
Greenhills Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24.

Position: Shop Assistant

- Monitored and updated sales display areas.
- Handled a range of financial transactions on a daily basis.
- Entrusted with opening and closing of the premises.
- Advised customers on products and services.

INTERESTS

- **New Technology:** Keen interest in software developments - self-taught in many applications (Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, HTML, CSS, UNIX).
- **Reading:** I am an active member of the Fairview Library book club with a specific interest in New Technology. I am also a regular contributor to Forums such as GeekZone and Digital Point.
- **Running:** I run on a regular basis and have recently completed two half marathons raising €1,000 in sponsorship money for Pieta House.

REFERENCES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Annex 1 – Sample Cvs

Chronological CV

Stephen Marcus

Address: 40 Flowers Road, Killiney, Co Dublin

Phone Number: 01 469 5234 / 086 298 7988

E-mail Address: stephenmarcus@gmail.com

LinkedIn: <http://ie.linkedin.com/in/stephenmarcus>

Personal Profile

23 years' experience in the construction and building trade in a range of roles. Advanced from labourer to site foreman responsible for large scale construction projects and overseeing over 30 staff. Owner of own construction company for 10 years during which time I completed large scale residential developments in Dublin, Cork and Limerick. I have just completed a Business Systems & IT course during which I updated my IT skills. I am now looking to utilise these skills in an office environment.

Skills & Achievements

Effective Communication

- Ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of individuals and groups i.e. clients, colleagues, suppliers and senior management.
- Strong presentation skills and confidence demonstrated by experience of delivering presentations and sales pitches to groups of five to fifty.
- Able to give and take instructions and maintain active listening during times of pressure.
- Studied Communications to FETAC level 5 which involved listening, feedback, editing, professional and presentation skills.

Teamwork

- Ability to work with several representatives from different disciplines concurrently to ensure successful completion of task.
- Managed the induction and supervision of new members of constructive staff.

Administration

- Gathered data from a wide range of sources for project during FETAC course, resulting in a 73% grade.
- Competent user of PowerPoint, Word, Outlook and Access applications.
- Effective completion of monthly and yearly accounts using Sage and Tas Books.

Time management

- Ability to work towards tight deadlines whilst maintaining attention to detail and highest customer service.
- Establishment of time lines for completion of tasks in stages.
- Designed and implemented a database of supplier's information to improve purchasing efficiency.

Educational & Training

- 2012-2013 Killester College, Killester, Dublin 5
Business Systems and Information Technology
(FETAC Level 5)
- Customer Service, Communications, Career Planning, Web Design, Computer Applications, Spreadsheet Methods, Web Processing, Information Technology Skills, Work Experience, Mathematics, Customer Relations & Manual Handling.
- Overall Grade – Distinction
- 1985 St Johns College, Crumlin, Dublin 12
Junior Certificate – Achieved
Leaving Certificate – Achieved

Work Experience

- 1999-2009 Self-employed (Construction Business)
Position: Owner / Foreman
- Drawing up building plans
 - Working to client spec
 - Training of staff
 - Allocation and delegation of tasks and responsibilities
 - Responsible for all HR functions i.e. recruitment, drawing of contracts & policies etc.
 - Production of accounts and preparation of monthly & yearly accounts.
- 1986 – 1999 O’Carrolls Construction Ltd.
- Position: Builder / Foreman
(1992 – 1999)
- Working to client specifications on residential builds
 - Construction of 2, 3 and 4 bed houses
 - Manager of a team of 30 builders
- Position: Labourer
(1986 – 1992)
- Preparing site for built
 - General manual labour

References available on request

Annex 1 – Sample Cvs

Europass CV



Curriculum Vitae

PERSONAL INFORMATION **Sarah Jones**

 10 Old Town, Sheffield, 78XT1H (United Kingdom)

 +44 389 5656 54241

 sarahjonesuk@gmail.com

JOB APPLIED FOR **Administrative secretary**

WORK EXPERIENCE

23/06/2008–Present

Office Clerk

Silver House Accountants Ltd, Sheffield (United Kingdom)

Maintaining online accounts using various accounting packages e.g. TAS books, Sage, Micropay.

Using a variety of software packages such as Microsoft Word, Outlook, Powerpoint, Excel and Access to produce and manage correspondence, databases and presentations.

Ad hoc reception duties as required.

Organising meetings i.e. issuing invitations, booking rooms, providing hospitality and welcoming guests.

Taking minutes during planning meetings.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

01/09/2011–18/06/2014

Certificate in Accounts Administration *EQF level 6*
Sheffield College, Sheffield (United Kingdom)

Year 1

- Business Administration
- Office Skills
- Introduction to Accounting
- Introduction to Taxation

Year 1

- Business Management
- Advanced Accounting
- Advanced Taxation

PERSONAL SKILLS

Mother tongue(s)

English

Other language(s)

French

UNDERSTANDING		SPEAKING		WRITING
Listening	Reading	Spoken interaction	Spoken production	
A2	B2	B1	A2	A2

Communication skills

- Good communication skills built up through working with various colleagues and clients in my current role
- Excellent written skills used on a daily basis through email and written correspondence as well as report writing

Organisational / managerial skills

- Excellent organisational and time management skills built up during my time in Silver House Accountants where I had to manage several tasks concurrently and to tight deadlines

Job-related skills

- Experience in the use of accounting packages such as TAS Books, Sage and Micropay
- Good working and practical knowledge of income and corporation tax as well as the application and reclamation of VAT
- Proficient in the administration of payroll, processing monthly payroll for 50 staff in my current role
- Proficient in the use of a variety of Microsoft applications including Word, Outlook, Excel, Powerpoint and Access

Digital competence

SELF-ASSESSMENT				
Information processing	Communication	Content creation	Safety	Problem solving
Independent user	Proficient user	Basic user	Basic user	Proficient user

[Digital competences - Self-assessment grid](#)

European Computer Driving Licence 2012

Other skills

- Qualified in First Aid
- Keen runner with a local running club and I have completed 5 half marathons and am currently training for the London Marathon
- I am a weekend volunteer for my local branch of Childline. I man the phone lines and have completed Child Protection training

Driving licence

B



Erasmus+

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