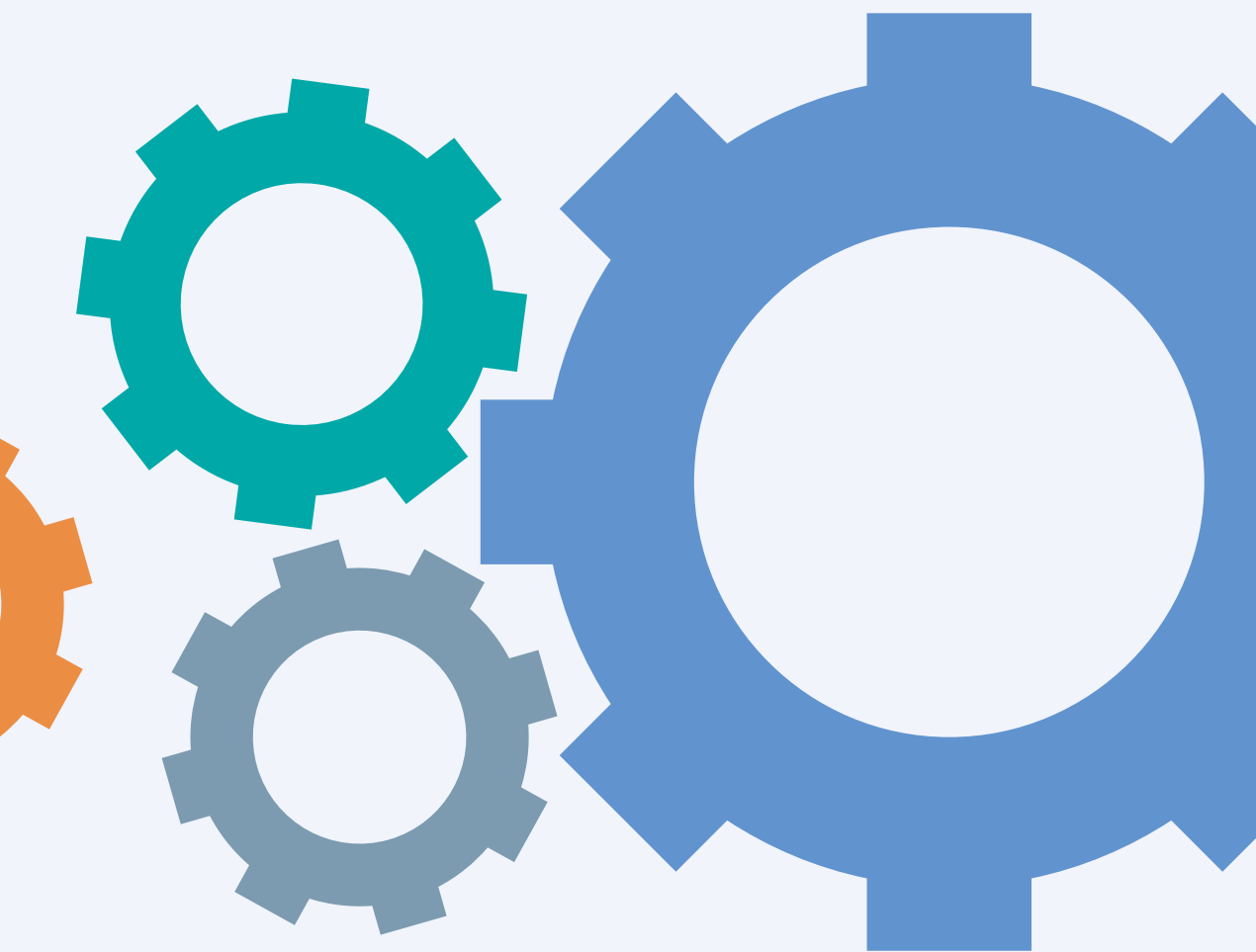


CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE HANDBOOK

CVS, APPLICATION FORMS, COVERING LETTERS



UNIVERSITY OF
WESTMINSTER 

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OUR SERVICES

FROM THE BEGINNING OF YOUR ACADEMIC JOURNEY AND THROUGHOUT YOUR STUDIES, WE OFFER A RANGE OF TOOLS AND DEDICATED CAREER SUPPORT, TO HELP YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVE YOUR EMPLOYABILITY.

Alongside this, there are several initiatives and schemes that you can take part in. These will help you build and develop your transferable skills and network with potential employers preparing you to face the ever-changing graduate job market.

Engage – is our online hub where you can:

- View part-time and graduate vacancies
- Book appointments and ask questions
- Find work placements
- View registered employers
- Book careers events
- View online resources including interview simulator and practice tests



CAREER SUPPORT

Take advantage of everything the Careers and Employability Service has to offer including:

- One-to-one appointments with our Careers Consultants
- Careers Fairs, workshops and panel events are great ways to explore the range of opportunities available to you whilst you study and when you graduate.
- Talent Bank scheme offers temporary and part-time vacancies across the University.
- Work placements to help you gain relevant work experience.
- The Explore Teaching scheme offers valuable work experience in schools and colleges.
- Resources and advice about working freelance, starting a small business or developing entrepreneurial skills.
- Mentoring to increase aspirations and enhance personal effectiveness.

APPLICATION PROCESS

RECRUITMENT IS A TWO-SIDED PROCESS, IT IS JUST AS MUCH AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO FIND OUT ABOUT AN EMPLOYER AS IT IS FOR THE RECRUITER TO ASSESS YOU. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF STAGES, EACH OF WHICH WILL GIVE YOU THE CHANCE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ORGANISATION.

CHECKLIST

First, check the required qualifications, professional skills and competences in the vacancy advert. Make sure you also meet visa requirements. This will save you time. If you don't meet the requirements, your application will most likely be rejected.

RESEARCH THE COMPANY AND THE SECTOR

Find out about the company and the sector using the company website, trade journals, LinkedIn, and the FACT, TARGETjobs, and Prospects websites as well as attending networking events.

APPLICATION

Prepare a targeted application for each role you are applying for using advice in this booklet. Our careers consultants are also available to help. Pay close attention to the job description and requirements. Remember, it is better to submit a few quality, targeted applications, rather than sending out many generalised applications.

Sometimes you will also be required to include a portfolio or an example of writing. Plan a timetable to meet the closing date. Always keep a copy of your application and the job description for yourself in case you are called for an interview.

ASSESSMENT CENTRE/ONLINE TESTING OR IN-TRAY EXERCISES

It is important to practice for the assessment centre, in-tray exercise or for an online test. Make sure you explore resources available on Engage+ at engage.westminster.ac.uk/students/abintegro/

INTERVIEW

For tips and interview practice book a 45-minute consultation with a careers consultant or use the interview simulator at engage.westminster.ac.uk/students/abintegro/InterviewSimulator

JOB OFFER OR FEEDBACK TO HELP IN YOUR JOB SEARCH

The majority of employers will let you know whether you've been successful after all shortlisted candidates have attended their interviews. If you're unsuccessful at interview, you can request feedback.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CVs

CV IS SHORT FOR 'CURRICULUM VITAE', WHICH IS LATIN FOR 'COURSE OF LIFE'. A MORE ACCURATE DESCRIPTION FOR A CV WOULD BE A MARKETING DOCUMENT SELLING YOU (A PRODUCT) TO AN EMPLOYER (A BUYER).

INTRODUCTION

Applying for paid roles, voluntary opportunities, internships and placements typically requires you to prepare a CV and a covering letter or to fill out an application form to which you may be invited to attach a CV. As the CV forms a key function in applying for these opportunities, it is important that your CV is serving its purpose. Your CV should be selling you to that specific employer paying particular attention to your relevant education, experience and skills for the opportunity they are offering.

THE ART OF TARGETING YOUR CV

A well-prepared and targeted CV is one that shows you have the qualities and skills the employer is looking for as well as being appropriate for the sector. In preparing a CV for a specific role, you need to:

- Analyse yourself – so that you can show how you meet the requirements of the position
- Research the opportunity – find out what the role involves from the job description, person specification and internet research
- Tailor – adapt your CV accordingly.

Remember, it is about what you can do for employers not about what they can do for you.

USES

The sole purpose of a CV is to show the potential employer that you are suitable for a particular opportunity, so that you will be invited for interview. It should inform and persuade. Unlike an application form you are in complete control of what you put in your CV and can therefore select and compose information in a way that emphasises your suitability for the available opportunity.

A properly targeted CV which is tailored for the specific role and employer can be used to:

- respond to an advertised vacancy where a CV is requested

A loosely targeted CV which is tailored for a specific industry or type of role can be used to:

- make a speculative approach to a company, ie writing to an employer to enquire about vacancies in their organisation which have not been advertised
- take to recruitment fairs, events and other networking opportunities
- send to an employment agency who is acting on your behalf.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT CV FORMAT

You are free to use any type or style of CV you would like. However, choosing how you present information could greatly influence your chances of success. There are two widely recognised CV formats: reverse-chronological or skills-based. Whichever you choose, it is essential that you tailor it to the sector you are applying to, especially for the creative industries.

Below is a list of the common types of CV and their main features and differences. Samples of all of these CV types can be found on Engage in the Resources topic CV.

REVERSE-CHRONOLOGICAL

The most commonly used CV type, a template for which we have included in this booklet. Chronological CVs are commonly used when the applicant has directly related experience for the role. The CV is structured in reverse chronological order. The idea is that you start with your most recent qualifications/experience and work your way back in time.

SKILLS-BASED

Similar to a reverse-chronological but instead of the focus being on education and experience, the focus is on skills. The first page is typically an overview of the relevant skills that you have to offer for the role with reference to the experience in which you gained those skills. An example of this type of CV can be found on Engage in the Resources topic CV.

CREATIVE

Creative CVs are used to apply for jobs in the creative fields: including advertising, the media, graphics and multimedia. There are different design tools to help you create your own infographics such as visualize.me

LAW

A law CV could be reverse chronological or skills based, but the reverse chronological approach is quite popular amongst law students. These CVs emphasise the candidate's legal experiences on the front page, utilise language that describe legal activity such as drafted, negotiated, project managed, reviewed, etc and are typically two pages in length.

TECHNICAL/SCIENTIFIC

Largely identical to a reverse-chronological but with the inclusion of a technical/lab skills section as the first section on page one underneath the personal details and summary/objective. The specialist skills section should summarise and give an indication of proficiency for the technical/ laboratory skills you have to offer which the employer will value. For a life sciences student, this will include laboratory techniques such as PCR and ELISA; a technology student would refer to SQL; and an architect might list AutoCAD or SketchUp.

The Careers and Employability Service has gathered a wide selection of bespoke resources at engage.westminster.ac.uk, on how to prepare and market yourself in CVs, covering letters/ emails and application forms.

REVERSE-CHRONOLOGICAL CV TEMPLATE

Insert Full Name

Postal address (optional)

Email: Use a professional email address

Tel: Mobile or landline (not both)

LinkedIn account address (optional)

Nationality/Visa status (if relevant)

Insert a 3 sentence profile paragraph here about you. Sentence 1: explain who you are / what your experience is. Sentence 2: explain the value you bring / the skills & attitude you have. Sentence 3: describe what you are looking for in your next role

Note: it is essential to tailor this for each application. The profile should be no longer than 4 lines.

Technical Skills (if the role requires technical expertise such as lab/IT skills. If not, remove this section)

- Be sure to list all relevant skills here with reference to hardware/software/procedures and your experience and/or proficiency with them. For example, *C++ - thorough working knowledge*

Education (or Work Experience if it is more relevant to the role you are applying for than your education)

Degree/Masters title dates from-to
Institution, location (in reverse chronological order – most recent education first)

- Relevant modules: List the modules you have studied that will be relevant to the role you are applying for.
- Mention and expand upon your dissertation or any major research project you have undertaken as part of the course if it is relevant to the role and of interest to the employer.
- Outline student membership of professional bodies.
- Mention any positions of responsibility you held such as Course Representative or Student Union role.
- Outline any extra-curricular activity you engaged in while studying. Membership of student clubs and societies.

Repeat the above for each higher education qualification

A-Levels (or equivalent university entry qualification) dates from-to
Institution, location

- Subject (grade), subject (grade), subject (grade). For example, *Law (B), Maths (B), Geography (C)*

GCSEs (or equivalent high school qualifications) dates from-to
Institution, location

- 9 A-C including English and Maths (Just summarise these as they will be of little importance to employers beyond the English and Maths)

Relevant Experience (if you have experience that directly relates to the role you are applying for)

Job title dates from-to
Employer, location (in reverse chronological order – most recent experience first)

- Responsibilities and achievements and relevant experiences that would be of interest to the employer for the role you are applying for.
- A relevant role with a significant length of service should provide you with lots to talk about in a CV. A shorter or less relevant role should give you less to talk about.

Relevant work experience – continued (avoid splitting sections across pages but do this if it is unavoidable)

Job title dates from-to
Employer, location

- Responsibilities and achievements and relevant experiences that would be of interest to the employer for the role you are applying for.
- A relevant role with a significant length of service should provide you with lots to talk about in a CV. A shorter or less relevant role should give you less to talk about.

Other experience (Use this section to account for other non-relevant experience)

Job title dates from-to
Employer, location

- Responsibilities and achievements and relevant experiences that would be of interest to the employer for the role you are applying for.
- As the role will not be relevant, it is worth giving some thought to the transferable skills that you gained in these non-relevant experiences which would be of value in the role you are applying for.

IT skills (if you haven't already documented these in a technical skills section at the top of page 1)

- List applications, languages, systems and your familiarity/proficiency with them.

Languages (if you have more than one to offer)

- List languages and degree of oral/written fluency

Interests and other skills

- Don't just list your interests, describe them and how they have helped you develop skills. Examples below.
- Gym: Enjoy keeping fit and healthy. Regularly attend the gym four or five times a week which requires strong self-motivation and self-discipline.
- Travel: Enjoy taking opportunities to visit new places, experience new cultures and practice language skills. Most recently visited China and Japan with their very different and ancient cultures.
- Driving licence: Hold a full clean UK driving licence.
- First Aider: Holder of a First Aid at Work certificate valid until November 20##

References

- Available on request

GRADUATE CV CHECKLIST

How does your CV measure up? Measure your CV against the checklist below. The checklist is split according to the main categories that should be used for your CV. **Please tick Yes or No**

HEADING (YES/NO)

1. Is your first name and surname in large bold letters at the top of the page? YES/NO

PERSONAL DETAILS (NOTE: DATE OF BIRTH AND MARITAL STATUS ARE NOT REQUIRED)

2. Have you included your address, telephone (landline OR mobile) number and email (a professional one), so that you can be contacted easily? YES/NO
3. If applicable, is your nationality and work permit status clearly stated? For international students it is advisable to include this. YES/NO

PROFILE STATEMENT

4. Your profile statement is no more than four lines? YES/NO
5. Is it short, punchy, interesting, highlighting your current situation, main skills, knowledge and experience, as well as your future career plans? YES/NO

TECHNICAL SKILLS PROFILE – RECOMMENDED FOR TECHNICAL ROLES

6. Is there a list of relevant software/hardware/programming languages/procedures/methodologies? YES/NO
7. Have you described your proficiency in using each of the above? YES/NO

EDUCATION

8. Does your education start with your current course and then work back? (reverse chronological order). YES/NO
9. Are the start and end dates given for each institution attended? YES/NO
10. Is the name of each institution attended included? YES/NO
11. Is there a full course title? YES/NO
12. Are the modules that are most relevant to your application included and are your strengths highlighted? YES/NO
13. Is your expected degree classification included? (not essential, but include if it is good). YES/NO
14. Are there brief details of your main project/dissertation/placement? YES/NO
15. Have pre-degree qualifications been summarised? ie NOT listed EVERY GCSE, just English and Maths. YES/NO

***Don't forget:** Once you are happy with your CV, bring it to the Careers and Employability Service for a 20 minute Short Consultation with a Careers Consultant who may be able to suggest other ways to improve it and make it even better.

WORK EXPERIENCE (YES/NO)

16. Does your work experience begin with the most recent and work back? YES/NO
17. Are start and end dates given? YES/NO
18. Is the company name/organisation included? YES/NO
19. Is the nature of the company/organisation's business stated if it isn't obvious from the company name? YES/NO
20. Has a job title been included? YES/NO
21. Are main duties, responsibilities, skills and achievements detailed? YES/NO

INTERESTS/POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

22. Have you focused on a few genuine interests rather than giving a long list? YES/NO
23. Is there a short explanation of each interest rather than one word? YES/NO
24. Do your interests/positions of responsibility demonstrate skills and competencies that the employer is looking for? YES/NO

REFERENCES

25. Is a reference section included? YES/NO
26. Does the statement 'references available on request' appear? YES/NO

FINAL CHECK

27. Are the sections and headings clear and arranged in a way that draws attention to the important information? YES/NO
28. Have active verbs and action words been used for added impact? YES/NO
29. No long paragraphs of text? YES/NO
30. Is it tailored to the job and organisation? YES/NO
31. Have you used clear and professional fonts, e.g. Arial, Calibri, Futura or Tahoma? YES/NO
32. Is the font size big enough (10 – 12pt)? YES/NO
33. Is it clear and concise? No more than two pages of A4? YES/NO
34. Is your CV free from spelling and grammatical errors? YES/NO
35. Are only the important elements such as your name, section headings, course titles and job titles in bold. YES/NO

HOW DO YOU MEASURE UP? COUNT UP HOW MANY 'YES' BOXES YOU HAVE TICKED. IF YOUR SCORE IS:

- 25-35** Well done! Your CV is in pretty good shape.
- 16-25** Your CV would benefit from some further work and development.
- 0-15** A score in this range suggests that your CV is not quite up to the standard expected.

COVERING LETTERS/EMAIL

THE AIM OF A COVERING LETTER IS TO DRAW THE READER'S ATTENTION TO THE MOST RELEVANT ASPECTS OF YOUR EXPERIENCE AND TO DEMONSTRATE YOUR ENTHUSIASM FOR A PARTICULAR ROLE.

YOUR COVERING LETTER SHOULD INCLUDE:

1. Why you are writing to the employer.

This is usually in response to an advertised vacancy but may be a speculative approach. If responding to an advertisement state where you saw it, using any reference numbers if requested. If the application is speculative, be specific about what sort of work you are interested in.

2. What you are offering the employer, ie refer to relevant aspects of your skills, knowledge and experience, giving more detail if appropriate. If the advertisement you are responding to has highlighted certain essential requirements, then ensure that you draw attention to how you meet these.

3. Why you want to do this sort of work and why you are interested in working for this employer. These can be covered in the same paragraph and is your chance to show your motivation and interest in the job. You can link this to your studies, employment and other activities.

4. When you are available for interview.

5. End on a positive note saying that you are looking forward to hearing from them.

* Optional – You may want to let the organisation know that you will be calling at some specific point in the near future to confirm receipt of your application. This way, if you do not hear from them, you can be sure that it is because your application has not been successful and not because they did not receive your application!

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Use no more than one side of A4 and no more than three to four paragraphs
- Ensure your letter is clearly laid out and check spelling and grammar
- Your covering letter should be targeted to each application
- Address the letter to a named person, if possible
- Dear Sir/Madam = Yours faithfully
- Dear <named person> = Yours sincerely

EXAMPLE OF A COVERING LETTER

Dear Ms Winter

I would like to apply for the role of Graduate Business Analyst as advertised on Guardian Jobs. I believe I have the skills and experience that you are looking for and I am confident that I am a good fit for the role and to GDJ International.

I will soon be completing my BA Business Management at the University of Westminster and I am expecting a 1st or a very high 2:1. My dissertation was on the topic of “An Analysis of International trade for UK-based companies in a post-Brexit UK” and I believe that the extensive research that I conducted in the completion of that will be especially pertinent to both the role and the continuing operation of GDJ International within the UK and Europe. Other key areas of my degree that I believe will be of particular use are modules in Business Decision Making, Managing and Leading People, Global Strategic Management and Sustainable Business which appear to be a good match for the knowledge areas you have stipulated in the requirements for the role.

I am currently working as a Consultant for Westminster Business Consultants, which is a student run Junior Enterprise operating within the University of Westminster. In this role I have been responsible for providing advice and market research for a number of SMEs, most recently a digital start-up working on the creation of an intelligent personal trading app. In working with this new company, I was instrumental in helping them to identify potential investors and in the preparation of their marketing pitch to those investors. I'm proud to say that they managed to secure the investment they needed to bring their app to market and they are now onto the next exciting stage for their new business. I love the challenges that this role presents and I'm keen to explore how I might bring the skills and experience gained here to your company.

As you will see from my CV, I have engaged in a broad range of extra-curricular business and enterprise activity throughout my degree studies as well as undertaking a range of business-based internships with a view to preparing myself for a career as a business analyst upon graduation. It was this aspiration which attracted me to the role you are offering. GDJ International seems just the right company for me to start my career in business. I read with interest on your website about your recent acquisition of a production facility in Italy and I would love to have been on the team that made that happen. It seems a quite exciting time to be joining your growing company and I want to be a part of the team that makes that happen.

I would greatly value the opportunity to discuss my suitability for the role further at interview and I hope to hear from you soon.

Thank you for considering my application.

Yours sincerely

A.B. Nonimus

SPECULATIVE LETTER

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT SPECULATIVE APPLICATIONS, VISIT WESTMINSTER.AC.UK/CAREERS AND FOLLOW THE LINKS TO 'FINDING WORK' THEN 'SPECULATIVE APPROACHES AND NETWORKING'.

You may want to approach companies in which you are interested but who have no advertised vacancies. To do this, you can use a similar format of covering letter to the previous example, but with a different opening sentence, such as:

'I am writing to ask whether you have vacancies within your Department. As you will see from my CV, I have'

Another strategy for finding out about vacancies which have not been advertised is to arrange for an informational interview with a company in a sector which interests you. The following outline letter would be appropriate:

I am very interested in a career in and would like to know if I could arrange to visit your..... to find out more about the work and obtain your advice on starting a career in this field. Your details were given to me by who suggested that you might be willing to give me some general information about careers in this area.

I have recently graduated with a degree in and am currently working for as an..... As you will see from my CV, I was given a variety of interesting tasks to complete and demonstrated my skills in This experience has given me an insight into and increased the sector's appeal.

Please find attached my CV for your consideration and I hope you will be able to spare me half an hour of your time, along with the opportunity to meet other members of your team for a brief discussion about their roles. I thank you for taking the time to read my letter and, if it is okay with you, will call you next week with a view to arranging a suitable appointment.

Yours sincerely
A.B. Nonimus.

APPLICATION FORMS

THE APPLICATION FORM ENABLES THE EMPLOYER TO ASK A SERIES OF QUESTIONS IN A STANDARD WAY AGAINST SET CRITERIA AND REQUIRED SKILLS.

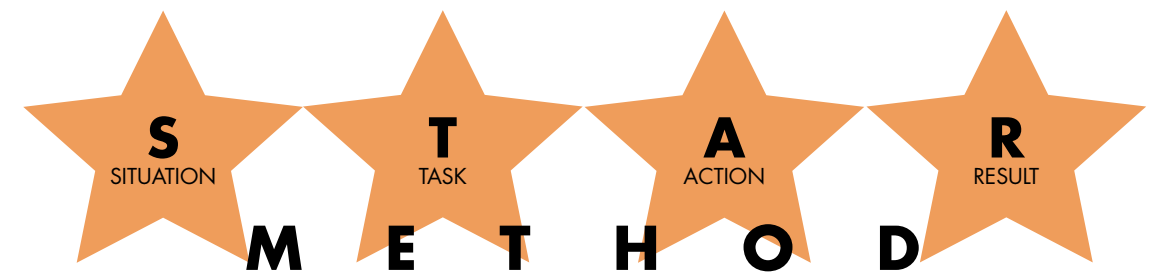
Here are our top tips on how to complete an application form effectively to maximise your chances of being invited for interview:

Tips for filling application forms:

- Remember to provide examples from all areas of your life including academic, employment and voluntary activities. For each of the essential and desirable criteria, you should write a statement that clearly demonstrates that you meet that particular criterion.
- Use STAR (Situation, Task, Action and Result) statements below to provide clear evidence that you meet each criterion. Try to use recent examples from the last three to five years.
- Ideally these examples should be work-based examples but University experiences can be used if you do not have a work-based one.

LIST OF TRANSFERABLE SKILLS YOU NEED TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE FOR:

- Commercial awareness
- Communication skills – face-to-face, email, telephone, presentations
- Customer service skills – negotiation, persuasion, diplomacy, tact, listening, going the extra mile
- Team work/leadership – flexibility, ability to follow instructions, confidence to suggest own ideas, delegating responsibility, receptive to the ideas of others
- Attention to detail
- Ability to work under pressure
- Ability to work to tight deadlines
- Ability to use standard office IT Applications (Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Outlook) – depending on the role, the 'standard' office applications may be quite different
- Ability to use own initiative
- Problem-solving/trouble-shooting
- Organisation skills – able to prioritise, methodical approach to work, manage own time effectively
- Multi-tasking



Describe a situation in which you demonstrated the skill/quality in the criteria. What was your role? Where were you working?

What were you doing? What was the task at hand? What problem were you looking to overcome?

What action did you take that clearly demonstrated the skill /quality in question? If it is a team-based example, you need to be clear about your contribution to the team.

What was the outcome? Were you congratulated/ commended/ rewarded? What would you do differently next time?

EXAMPLES OF DEMONSTRATING SKILLS IN APPLICATION FORMS

Most questions on application forms encourage you to provide specific evidence of competencies, usually outlined on the person specification. It's not enough simply to mention what skills you have but when and how you put them into practice. Remember to provide examples from all areas of your life including academic, employment and voluntary activities. For each of the essential and desirable criteria, you should write a statement that clearly demonstrates that you meet that particular criterion. Use STAR statements to provide clear evidence that you meet each criterion. Try to use recent examples from the last three to five years.

For example:

Q: GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF ACTIVITIES OR EXPERIENCES YOU HAVE UNDERTAKEN TO PROVIDE OUTSTANDING CUSTOMER SERVICE?

When I was working as a volunteer shop assistant at Oxfam, an elderly lady came into the shop and asked if I could help her find a winter coat that would fit her. I showed her to where the coats were and helped her try some on but they were all a little big for her. I went to the back room where we had recently started sorting through some new donations and found two more coats there but they too were a little big for her. I apologised for not being able to help her on this occasion but told her I would keep an eye out for a smaller coat if one came in and, if she left her phone number, I would give her a

call. She was very happy with my kind offer and left her number. The following week, a smaller coat was donated and I immediately set it to one side and gave the lady a call. She was so happy to receive my call as she didn't expect it at all. She came in that afternoon and while the coat was still not quite her size, she decided to take it anyway and jokingly said, "I'll grow into it." Experiences like that inspire me to do my best to help every customer to the best of my ability.

Q: GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF A TIME WHEN YOU HAVE WORKED IN A TEAM. WHAT WAS YOUR ROLE AND WHAT DID YOU CONTRIBUTE TO THE TEAM'S PERFORMANCE?

As a member of the university's drama committee in my second year, I co-organised a visit to Stratford-upon-Avon for members of the Theatre Group. My personal objectives were to arrange travel and accommodation for anyone wishing to participate. I promoted the event initially by postering each university campus and e-mailing all 250 people registered on the society's database. I set a strict deadline for receipt of payments from people wishing to book. Based on a realistic estimate, I arranged appropriate travel facilities, in this case a mini-bus, and liaised with a small hotel for a discounted block booking. Owing to a late surge of interest in the visit, I negotiated a larger bus and arranged extra accommodation with the hotel which required certain students to "double-up". The visit was a great success measured by the positive feedback received and the £500 revenue generated for the committee.

WORK PLACEMENTS

GAINING EXPERIENCE WITHIN THE WORKPLACE IS HIGHLY VALUED BY EMPLOYERS AND COULD HELP YOU TO SECURE A GRADUATE ROLE.

Other benefits include:

- Experiencing a professional work-based environment
- Trying out a particular job role and exploring career options
- Making industry contacts and building your network
- Developing skills such as team work, communication and organisation
- Putting your theoretical knowledge into practice
- Increasing your knowledge of the application and recruitment process.

Work placements can also be called internships or work experience, and take the form of short-term work experience, longer-term internships, or even a year-long placement year. They can be part-time or full-time.

FINDING A WORK PLACEMENT

There are a variety of ways that you can find a work placement or internship. Most formal internship programmes at large or medium-sized employers will be advertised online. However for smaller organisations don't underestimate the benefit of word of mouth. If you identify a company you'd like to work for, get in touch and find out if they could offer you some experience. Sources of placements include:

1. Engage – all placement opportunities are published on Engage, including information outlining what to expect and offers tips and advice on accessing the available support from the work placement team.
2. Industry and placement websites – such as RateMyPlacement, Milkround and Prospects.
3. Speculative applications – it is widely accepted that not all vacancies are openly advertised. The 'hidden' jobs market can be a great source of internship opportunities. See page 12 for more information.
4. Networking and employer events.
5. University schemes – including teaching placements in schools and colleges.

THE POWER OF VOCABULARY

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE ACTION AND DESCRIPTIVE WORDS WHEN PREPARING YOUR CV OR APPLICATION FORM. THE USE OF POSITIVE AND DYNAMIC WORDS CAN MAKE OFTEN MUNDANE TASKS AND ACHIEVEMENTS SOUND IMPRESSIVE:

PLACEMENT FAQs

Q: CAN I DO A WORK PLACEMENT ABROAD?

A work placement outside of the UK has the added advantage of exposure to a global marketplace. It is important however to take extra precautions when looking at opportunities abroad. Take some time to ensure the company is legitimate and consult the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website regarding the country.

Whether you are a home or an international student, make sure that you are aware of any visa requirements of the country you intend to visit and where relevant, the terms of your student visa.

The University also has a dedicated Student Mobility Team who may be able to provide you with information related to working overseas. For more information, contact: goabroad@westminster.ac.uk

Q: I'M AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ON A TIER 4 VISA. CAN I DO A WORK PLACEMENT?

For international students, a work placement is an excellent way of getting UK experience. Please be aware that undergraduate students from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) on a Tier 4 Visa must not work over 20 hours per week (as stated on the Visa) during term time. If you are taking a short work placement module as an assessed part of your course and your work placement team approves your placement in advance then you may be able to exceed the 20 hours. You should contact the Student Advice Team for more information.

If you are planning to take a full year work placement and you are on a Tier 4 visa, you must contact Student Advice to check how this will affect your visa. Taking a full year work placement is regarded as a change of course. Because of this, under the Immigration Rules at the time of writing, you will need to return to your home country to apply for a new Tier 4 visa. You may need to do this before you can start the placement year. The rules are complicated and often change with very little notice. It is therefore important that you check with Student Advice as to how your visa will be affected before you make any decision on taking a placement year.

Q: WILL I BE PAID FOR THE WORK PLACEMENT?

Work placements should be paid at National Minimum Wage or above. However there are some exceptions, including:

- When the placement is part of a credit-bearing module
- For a charity or voluntary organisation
- Where you are completing a short period of work shadowing or observing business activities.

Whether the placement is paid or unpaid, you may be able to apply for it to be added to your Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR).

KEY CONTACTS

Each college has a dedicated Work Experience and Placement Team to assist students. You can find all contact details at westminster.ac.uk/work-placements

- Advanced
- Assigned
- Assessed
- Absorbed
- Accelerated
- Attained
- Attracted
- Announced
- Appraised
- Budgeted
- Bolstered
- Balanced
- Boosted
- Bargained
- Benefited
- Beneficial
- Comply
- Critiqued
- Closed
- Collaborated
- Designed
- Delegated
- Demonstrated
- Developed
- Detected
- Efficient
- Enhanced
- Excelled
- Exceeded
- Enriched
- Fulfilled
- Financed
- Forecasted
- Formulated
- Generated
- Guided
- Granted
- Helped
- Hosted
- Implemented
- Investigated
- Increased
- Initiated
- Influenced
- Integrated
- Innovated
- Instituted
- Justified
- Listed
- Logged
- Maintained
- Mentored
- Measured
- Multiplied
- Negotiated
- Observed
- Operated
- Obtained
- Promoted
- Presented
- Programmed
- Provided
- Projected
- Qualified
- Quantified
- Quoted
- Recommended
- Refine
- Revamp
- Reacted
- Retained
- Recovered
- Reinstated
- Sustained
- Skilled
- Scheduled
- Supported
- Secured
- Simplified
- Screened
- Segmented
- Streamlined
- Strengthened
- Triumphed
- Taught
- Tutored
- Translated
- Trained
- Uncovered
- United
- Unified
- Updated
- Upgraded
- Validated
- Viewed
- Witnessed

For example, rather than saying "Worked on the design of a new IT system for the department", you might say "Developed and implemented a new departmental IT system".



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