

CV GUIDELINES

- Give your word document a clear title which includes your name in order to make it easily identifiable when emailed, such as “John Smith CV”
- Use a simple, clean font such as Times New Roman or Arial.
- Head your CV with your full name, address, contact phone number(s), email address, date of birth and nationality.
- Follow this with a personal summary/statement. State what your objective is, e.g., “I am looking to obtain a trainee reporter’s role at a regional newspaper”, followed by a very brief statement about the main skills that you can offer. Keep this to a maximum of three sentences.
- List your work experience in reverse chronological order, and don’t leave any gaps. If you have periods of when you weren’t working, make brief mention of why. Make sure all dates are correct. List your job title, place of employment, and geographical location of employment. Set out any achievements or improvements you made while you were employed at those roles. If you have not had a full-time job before, then list part-time jobs and/or work placements.
- List your qualifications and education in reverse chronological order. List the number and type of exams you’ve passed but not the grades, unless they were exceptional. Include any relevant professional organisations and training courses.
- Follow the education section with an “other skills” section where you list your achieved shorthand speed, computer skills, and any other technology skills that are relevant to the jobs you are applying for, e.g., video journalism, broadcast technology, online editing. Also include any knowledge of foreign languages and whether you have a full clean driving licence.
- Include a brief description of your interests and hobbies.
- Add two referees and their phone numbers at the end of your CV.
- Check your CV carefully for grammar and punctuation – there must be NO mistakes. Use both spell check and a dictionary, but keep in mind that spell check doesn’t pick up correct spellings used incorrectly or misplaced apostrophes. Have someone proof read your CV for you.
- Make sure all dates are correct.
- Some editors prefer CVs to be a single page; never go over two pages.
- Use bullet points to break up text where appropriate, and be concise.

- Don't include failures in your CV. If you have to include a mistake in your past, then provide a brief explanation that demonstrates that you have learned from the experience.

COVER LETTER GUIDELINES

- You should always include a cover letter, and if you apply via email, then attach a separate word document entitled, "John Smith cover letter". Also, cut and paste the text of your cover letter directly into your email.
- Research the company you're applying to so that you can gauge what skills you need and demonstrate knowledge about the company.
- In the first paragraph of your cover letter, state which role you are applying for, where you saw it advertised, and when it was advertised. If the role has a reference number, include it.
- Introduce the second paragraph with the phrase, "As you will see from my CV ..." so that an employer will know that you've sent your CV if it goes missing. Briefly state why you feel you are qualified for the job, and benchmark your statements against the requirements listed in the job advertisement. For example, if the job requires two years' experience in a newsroom and you have that experience, then state that exactly. Keep this paragraph concise; no more than five sentences.
- In the third paragraph, thank the employer for their consideration, and tell them how they can reach you. This should be no more than two sentences.
- Check your cover letter for grammar and punctuation mistakes with spell check, a dictionary and ask another person to proof read it for you. It is crucial that the person's name to whom you are addressing is spelled correctly, and that their title is correct. If you misspell an editor's name or get their title wrong, your CV won't be considered.

INTERVIEWING GUIDELINES

- Research the company that you are interviewing with. Familiarise yourself with the publication/website/broadcast channel for a journalists' job opening, and go armed with creative editorial ideas. Editors will want to see evidence of enthusiasm and knowledge about their company and their product.
- Make sure that your interview attire is neat and appropriate for the type of company you are meeting with. Bring a nice portfolio with copies of your CV and your writing clips. Bring a pen and paper for note taking.
- Arrive five to 10 minutes early for your interview. If necessary, visit the location ahead of time so that you know where you are going and how long it will take to get there.

- Maintain eye contact with the interviewer, and listen carefully to the questions before you answer them.
- Be prepared to answer questions about your strengths and weaknesses and to explain why you are the best candidate for the role, i.e., what you can do for the company rather than what they can do for you.
- Make sure you are updated on current events, able to discuss what is in the news, and how different mediums cover various news topics.