CVs FOR MASTERS AND PHDs

A CV is a concise summary of your skills, achievements and experience inside and outside of your academic work. It should be succinct and engaging, conveying the most relevant points about you. Always adjust or adapt your CV for each specific application, focusing on the core requirements.

Types of Postgraduate CVs

CV FOR AN ACADEMIC ROLE

- Used when applying for lecturing or research based-roles.
- Main focus is your academic credibility and your research, teaching and administrative skills.
- Include details of specialist skills, research outcomes and any funding or grants that you've received as well as professional memberships.
- Writing style should be scholarly, yet easily readable and understandable to those outside your field.

CV FOR A DISCIPLINE-RELATED, NON-ACADEMIC JOB

- Useful when applying for related jobs in industry, commerce or the public sector.
- Provide a focused profile and skills summary to assist the employer to spot exactly what you can offer.
- If your first degree is also related to your application, you may highlight its relevance by listing modules or briefly explaining your final year research paper.
- You should include accomplishments, projects and experience that highlight your suitability for the specific industry and job role.

CV FOR AN UNRELATED, NON-ACADEMIC JOB

- Use if you are changing your career focus after a Masters or PhD. (Your reason for a career change can be highlighted in your cover letter.)
- The most recommended CV type for this is a skills-based CV.
- A skills-based CV allows you to bring together your work experience, academics and other experiences in a way that immediately highlights the relevance of your accomplishments to the job role.
- Avoid too much content detail about your Masters or PhD.

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CV for an academic role

The following sections are typical of an academic CV:

- **Personal Information**: Write your name, telephone number and email address at the top of your CV and ensure they stand out.
- **Education**: Ensure you include degrees, titles of theses, and names of supervisors.
- **Awards and Funding:** Include undergraduate/postgraduate prizes, travel grants, doctoral scholarships, early career fellowships, and grants you have led or are named on.
- **Research Interests:** Write bullet points summarising your research.
- **Research Experience**: Include any post docs or fellowships and research assistant jobs. You may include more detail about your doctoral research too.
- **Teaching Experience**: Note any experience in lecturing, seminars, tutoring, supervision, demonstrating, mentoring and teaching. Give details about the role and responsibilities – even if it was informal – such as level of students, class sizes and topics you taught.
- **Administrative Experience:** Highlight any conferences/seminars/reading groups you've organised, committees you have sat upon, and any other relevant administration experience.
- **Relevant Training**: Include academic teaching training, research methods training or any relevant courses you have completed.
- **Patents**: Give details of the title, inventors, patent number and date granted.
- **Professional memberships:** List these (e.g. Actuarial Society of South Africa) and include dates.
- **Publications**: Give full details as you would if citing them and use a consistent style. You may wish to highlight (e.g. bold/underline) your name.
- **Conference presentations and posters**: Specify whether it was a paper or poster and cite similarly to your publications, with full author list, title, date and location.
- **Relevant research/technical/laboratory/discipline-specific skills:** You may find it useful to list these under one heading, if you find yourself repeating throughout various sections.
- Referees: Ideally these should all be academic referees who know you well and who have agreed to be your referee.

Have a look at the required skills and competencies outlined by the hiring department or research group. Prioritize your experiences and accomplishments that are most vital for the position you are applying for.

Some pro-active descriptions to use throughout your CV

Accomplished, Achieved, Administered, Advised, Advocated, Analysed, Assembled Authorised , Awarded, Budgeted, Captained, Chaired, Coached, Completed, Conducted, Co-ordinated, Delivered, Demonstrated, Designed, Determined, Developed, Devised, Directed, Discovered, Earned, Edited, Employed, Engineered, Ensured, Established, Evaluated, Examined, Expanded, Facilitated, Founded, Generated, Implemented, Improved, Increased, Initiated , Instituted , Instructed, Invented, Launched, Led, Managed, Marketed, Maximised, Mediated, Negotiated, Obtained, Operated , Organised , Oversaw, Performed, Planned, Prepared, Presented, Prioritised, Produced, Promoted, Raised, Reconciled, Recruited, Represented, Saved, Set up, Simplified, Solved, Supervised, Targeted, Transformed

Choose headings that suit your experience whilst demonstrating your suitability for the role.

Types of Postgraduate CVs

- **Personal Information**: Write your name, telephone number and email address at the top of your CV and ensure they stand out.
- **Education:** Include relevant projects and major pieces of work such as your dissertation, highlighting what is most relevant about your thesis - the subject matter or the methodology. If it is closely related to the job you may want to provide a synopsis as a CV appendix.
- **Awards:** Provide details of academic awards or prizes.
- **Related work experience:** Your paid, unpaid and placement work experience will strengthen your application. If you have several examples, you could group them together in a single section using headings like commercial/technical/ legal experience.
- **Publications:** Give full details as you would if citing them and use a consistent style.

- **Conferences and presentations**: Specify whether it was a paper or poster and cite similarly to your publications, with full author list, title, date and location.
- **Membership of professional bodies**: List and include dates.
- **Skills:** Highlight relevant soft, technical or commercial skills, as well as discipline-specific skills.
- **Referees:** Provide 1 academic and 1 employer referee.

CV for an unrelated, non-academic job

- A skills-based CV normally starts with extended bullet points on each of your relevant skills.
- If choosing to use a skills-based CV, study the job requirements well enough to be able to provide your most relevant skills.
- Ensure your skills are supported with substantive evidence.
- You may also use a traditional CV and start with a short profile that focuses on specific skills.
- Ensure that in this CV, you give prominence and space to what's most relevant for the job you are applying to.
- Emphasize the skills developed through all your relevant experience.
- Although you should not put too much emphasis on your PhD and Masters content, in this CV you could highlight the relevant skills (developed from them) such as planning and organisation, analytical, oral and written communication, problem solving and IT skills.

Skills

Skills are transferrable to different job roles and employers. You should include a Skills section in your CV and list the skills that will be most useful in the role you are applying for, providing evidence of how you've used your skills in real life situations. The latter highlights the transferability of your skills. Using numbers, percentages and values in your evidence to quantify your impact gives a sense of scale to your accomplishments.

Here are some examples:

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Communication

- Presenting research results at national and international scientific meetings (up to 500 people)
- Preparing PhD thesis (40 000 words) and annual progress reports for grant-awarding bodies
- Publishing scientific papers in high-quality, peer-reviewed journals
- Teaching and demonstrating at undergraduate practical and tutorial sessions (2008-2011) and Open University Summer School (2008)

Analytical thinking

- Applying theoretical and scientific principles and concepts
- Applying statistical and numerical techniques to process data
- Interpretation of spatial data

Research and Analysis

- Identifying appropriate research questions and designing experiments to test hypotheses
- Generating data through research and analysing using appropriate analytical packages
- Gathering and assimilating information from published sources to write review documents
- Analysis using XJP and PSS 2.0 industry standard systems
- Application of scientific theory to qualitative data

IT

- Microsoft Office (ECDL completed 2010); daily use of Microsoft Word (thesis and publications), PowerPoint (conference presentations), Excel (data analysis)
- Knowledge of bespoke packages, GIS and statistical analysis and modelling tools
- Knowledge of the latest C++ standards

Consider other skills you may well have developed as a postgraduate:

Teaching, Project Management, Collaboration, Complex Problem-Solving, Mentoring, Administration, Supervision, Critical Thinking etc.

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