

TIPS SHEET TO ACCOMPANY:

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Preparing a CV and covering letter

CV

See page 218 of *Product Design* for an example of a CV.

- Make your CV one A4 page – two at the most. If two pages, ensure most relevant information appears on the first page.
- Always type your CV. The layout should be simple and look professional. Use white space to separate sections and keep to one easy-to-read font throughout. Headings can be in bold or a bigger font size to make them stand out.
- Present the information in clear, distinct sections:
 - personal details – name, address, contact information
 - personal profile – an opening statement which outlines your general skills and abilities and designed to convince a potential employer that you are the right person for the job
 - education/key qualifications – list these in reverse-chronological order so that the most relevant and higher qualifications are read first
 - work experience – also featuring the most recent first, list each company you have worked for as well as job title, length of employment and the main key duties
 - key skills – list any specific skills you have (e.g. languages or CAD skills) and if you have been involved in any projects or completed any courses that have given you particular relevant experience and skills
 - personal qualities – list any relevant personal interests and activities which show transferable skills such as organization, motivation and teamwork
 - referees – put ‘References available on request’ (make sure you always check in advance that someone is willing to act as your referee and that it is ok to provide their details to a potential employer)
- Leave out the following information:
 - listing every GCSE subject and degree module studied

- outdated/irrelevant awards and achievements
- marital status, gender and age
- 'Curriculum Vitae' at the top of the page – you could replace this with your name
- Check and double check your CV for spelling and grammatical errors (don't rely on a computer spell-checker). Ask someone else to proofread it for you.
- Print your CV on good-quality white or off-white paper and present each page on a different sheet, not double-sided.

Covering letter

See page 219 of *Product Design* for an example of a covering letter.

- Make your covering letter one A4 page.
- Always type your letter unless a handwritten one is requested by the employer.
- Keep the layout simple and professional looking.
- Use the following format:
 - your name, address and contact information
 - the date
 - dear [name] – write to a particular person (even if you are 'cold-calling' try to research who you should address the letter to)
 - job applying for
 - first paragraph – use the opening paragraph to explain why you are writing, the specific position you are applying for, how you heard about the job or whether someone referred you
 - second and third paragraphs – use these paragraphs to outline why the company should hire you by summarizing the qualities you have for the position, your educational achievements, previous experience and skills and how they directly relate to the position for which you are applying; also demonstrate that you have researched the company and know about them and the nature of their work
 - final paragraph – refer here to the items you have enclosed e.g. CV, portfolio, references; if applying for a specific job, simply thank the reader for their time

and consideration and say that you look forward to hearing from them; if writing a speculative letter say something along the lines of ‘I will contact you the week of (date) of (month) to discuss opportunities within your company.’

- end the letter with ‘Yours sincerely’ (or ‘Yours faithfully’ if using ‘Dear Sir/Madam’) followed by your name signed and then typed
- Check and double check your letter for spelling and grammatical errors (don’t rely on a computer spell-checker). Ask someone else to proofread it for you.
- Print your letter on good-quality white or off-white paper.