

CURRICULUM VITAE WRITING GUIDE

The curriculum vita (also referred to as CV or vita) is a detailed and structured listing of education, publications, projects, awards, and work history. It has commonly been used among professionals in higher education; however, it is also becoming more common for undergraduates applying for admission to graduate and professional schools, proposals for fellowships or grants, and for selected areas of employment such as teaching positions, institutional research, and independent consulting. The CV works best for job seekers with extensive academic and professional credentials who are applying for positions in education or research.

The CV is far more detailed (typically 3-8 pages) than a resume (1-2 pages). The CV can include educational and work achievements, research experience, languages, skills, grants/fellowships/scholarships, classes, licenses or certifications, professional associations, and other relevant information. A resume is a shorter, concise document that highlights aspects of your career that relate to the position you are applying for. Unless the prospective employer specifically requests a CV, you are safest to send a resume.

Resumes and CV's differ in their use, format, and length. Since CV's tend to be used more for scientific and teaching positions, they tend to provide great detail about academic and research experiences. Where resumes tend toward brevity, vitas lean toward completeness. While vitas do not have the "one page rule" of resumes, you must be careful not to cross the line between providing depth to showcase your qualifications and providing too much information which may be interpreted as verbosity and turn an employer off to your credentials. Sections

Sections

- Applicant information: Name, address, phone number(s), email
- Professional, vocational, or research objective: Make sure your goals, which should be logically and clearly stated, match those of the program or position for which you are applying.
- Education: Include information like postgraduate work (if any), graduate work/degree(s), thesis/dissertation titles, honors, undergraduate degree(s), major/minor, grade point averages. Educational background should go toward the end; recent graduates are the exception. When forwarding a CV to a potential employer, include copies of diplomas or certificates earned along with transcripts.
- Relevant Course Work: List all courses in groups that support and strengthen your objective. Provide complete course titles (not numbers or abbreviations) with brief descriptions where appropriate. List grades received if you want to highlight academic performance or demonstrate a trend in performance.
- Awards, Honors, and Patents: Examples include receipt of competitive scholarships or fellowships, Dean's List, and names of scholastic honorariums.
- Research Experience: (if applicable) Describe research projects recently conducted or in progress. Include the type of research, purpose of the study, etc.
- Teaching Experience: (if applicable) List the names of courses you have taught, the institution and dates where you taught, and brief course descriptions. Teaching evaluations are a good way to demonstrate your perceived effectiveness as a teacher. Tutoring experience can also be included. CV Writing Guide, p. 2
- Relevant Experience: List positions that relate to the type of work you are seeking. Be sure to include organization name, city and state, job title, dates, and a description of your duties and responsibilities using action verbs. Use reverse chronological order.
- Publications: Give bibliographic citations using the format appropriate to your academic discipline for articles, pamphlets, books/chapters in books, conference proceedings, magazine articles, reports, etc. that you have authored or co-authored. List unpublished manuscripts ONLY if they are being considered for publication

- Related Skills: Usually this is not included as a separate section but is incorporated throughout the CV. It is appropriate, however, if you are listing special computing or language skills.
- Presentations: Give the titles of professional presentations, the name of the conference or event, and the dates and location.
- Professional Licenses or Certifications: List all areas of certification relevant to the position. Include type of certification and the year it was received.
- Memberships and Associations: List the organization names and dates you have been a member. If you hold an office in the organization, include this as well.
- Institutional Service: This section includes the names of institutional committees you have served on (including any offices held), student groups you have supervised, special academic projects you have directed, etc.
- Community Service: Volunteer work, church work, community service organizations, etc.
- References: You have the option of listing your references on your CV or not. If you decide to list your references on your CV, list only the names of people you have asked to be a reference for you. Make sure all of their contact information is correct and up-to-date.

No CV contains all of the headings listed above. Some CV's will have headings not listed here. The key to developing your CV is to carefully consider all of your own education and work experiences when deciding which headings will be the most effective in accomplishing your goal. The order in which these broad categories might appear on your CV should reflect the degree of importance you attribute to them. Begin with the most important or most relevant information and follow with the rest of your headings in descending order of importance.

Formatting

Now that content of the CV has been addressed, you must now work on issues such as writing style, grammar, format, and layout. The format of an academic CV is fairly standard and straightforward but there are some variations across disciplines. It is helpful to consult with members of your department to learn about particularities for your discipline. You have a great deal of flexibility in how you organize your CV. The best format for you will be the one that communicates your competencies for a single type of work.

Writing Style: Use a confident, authoritative, and crisp writing style throughout your CV. Be concise and consistent in content and format. Avoid the use of personal pronouns (I, me, mine, etc.).

Grammar: Grammar and spelling must be perfect. Use subject verb agreement. If an action took place in the past, use past tense. Postal Abbreviations: Use United States postal abbreviations. For example, GA for Georgia, OH for Ohio, PA for Pennsylvania.

Spacing: Double or triple space between headings; single space within headings. Allow appropriate indentation with liberal use of white space. To highlight information, use boldface, italics, or underlining.

Paper: Use a professional quality white cotton bond paper. 8 ½ x 11. Should you decide to use a color; stick with conservative light colors such as ivory, light beige, or gray. Use a laser printer.

Length: Use bullet points to draw attention to key points. Paragraph descriptions are difficult to scan. Type your name and the appropriate page number on each page of your CV

Revisions

When you are in the revision process it helps to give your CV to several people to proofread. Ask for feedback (such as, what information stood out? What information got lost?) Have the document proofread for spelling, grammar, clarity, and conciseness.

Suggestions of people to review your CV include:

- 1) A professional who knows you well who may be able to provide suggestions regarding content. Have you left out important information? Can a particular section be rewritten to better reflect your responsibilities and achievements?
- 2) A professional in your field who you do not know well who can provide you with critical feedback about content and layout.
- 3) Colleagues and friends whose advice you respect.

Realize and accept that you might not agree with some or all of the criticisms or suggestions that this process will generate. Finally, keep these points in mind during the revision process. To maximize effectiveness, the CV should be:

Clear: Your completed vita should be well organized, logical, readable, and easily understandable.

Concise: Don't duplicate your information. Nothing should appear on your CV more than once. Summarize and highlight your information. Do not pad the CV with extraneous information.

Complete: Include all important and relevant information that the reader needs to make an informed decision about your application.

Consistent: Use the same fonts/style throughout; don't mix categories and dates.

Current: Continually update the CV; revise at least once a year, ideally monthly.

At a minimum, when you are developing a vita for international employment, keep the country's culture in mind. Consider using a translator to make sure the context is translated, not just a literal translation word for word. Regarding content, be sure that you include your contact information, personal data, summary of your work history, summary of your professional qualifications and memberships, and a summary of your education.

Curriculum Vitae Example Format

Your Name

Street Address

City, State Zip

Telephone (xxx)xxx-xxxx

E-mail

Education

(Reverse chronological order: start with doctoral study and work backwards to Bachelor's degree. Include all institutions where you have studied.)

University

City, State

Degree

Graduation Date

Dissertation/Thesis topic

Relevant Coursework

List all courses taken in your field that relate to the position for which you are applying or any courses that demonstrate competency in your field.

Licensure and Certification

Type of license or certificate (date received)

Awards

Name of award (date received)

Teaching Experience

University Name, Department

City, State

Course Title. Professional Title (Teaching Assistant, Tutor, etc.).

Date

Research Experience (reverse chronological order)

Organization Name

City, State

Advisor's Name

Date

Brief description of research project or work in process. List equipment and research methods used.

Relevant Experience (reverse chronological order)

Organization Name, City, State

Title

Dates employed

- Responsibility 1
- Responsibility 2
- Responsibility 3

Publications

Use the bibliographic listing as used by your discipline

"Title of Study," authors, title of journal or magazine, date, volume, page numbers, etc.

Presentations

"Title of presentation," Conference or Seminar where presented, City, State, Date.

Special Skills

Include things like computer skills, instrumentation relevant to your field, statements summarizing your “soft skills” that may not be demonstrated through your experience, and language fluency.

Professional Associations

Office Held, Organization Name (dates)

Professional Service

List any volunteer work, community service, committees served on, etc. Include dates and when needed, brief descriptions of work completed.

References

Choose either “Available upon request” or list your references individually as part of your vita. If you list your references include the following information:

Name

Title

Name of Organization

Work Address

City, State, Zip

Work telephone (xxx)xxx-xxxx

Work e-mail

Note: This sample is intended to be used as a guideline only. Remember that not all vitas include the same information. Add, delete, or edit the headings to best represent yourself to employers.