

How to write your CV

A practical beginner course with editable CV samples

Shadykone | Author Shady | English | Beginner

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Start here

Create a clear, truthful CV for one target role. This course walks you from an evidence bank to a tailored draft, with worked examples, practical exercises and answer explanations. You do not need previous paid employment to begin.

The course uses CV to mean a concise job application document, also called a resume in many countries. It does not cover specialist academic CVs or every local hiring convention. Follow the employer's instructions and current local guidance. No CV format, course or automated score guarantees an interview, ATS result or job.

What you will make

- A private evidence bank matched to a target vacancy
- A tailored editable CV built from your own accurate facts
- A proofread submission file and a simple application log

Study plan

1. Choose a target role and gather evidence about 35 minutes
2. Build clear CV sections about 35 minutes
3. Write honest achievement bullets about 40 minutes
4. Adapt the CV to your starting point about 35 minutes
5. Make the document readable and easy to process about 30 minutes
6. Tailor proofread and submit safely about 35 minutes

Final knowledge check about 20 minutes. Total estimate: 230 minutes, or about 3 hours 50 minutes. This covers reading, practice and assessment, not video runtime. Work at your own pace; drafting may take longer.

Using the downloads

Three fictional one-page examples show a student or first-job CV, an early-career CV and a career-change CV. A blank editable template provides a starting structure. Every name, organisation, qualification and achievement in the samples is invented for teaching. Email addresses use example.com. Do not submit a sample as your own or contact its placeholder addresses.

Lesson 1 Choose a target role and gather evidence

Estimated 35 minutes including exercise and three questions.

- Identify the main requirements of one vacancy.
- Build an evidence bank from paid and unpaid experience.
- Separate supported claims from skills still being developed.

Start with one job

A CV is a short, selective account of the experience you can bring to a particular opportunity. In this course, CV means the concise job-application document also called a resume in many countries. Academic CVs, government applications and regulated professions can require different formats. Always check the vacancy instructions and local conventions before using a sample.

Choose one real or practice vacancy. Copy its role title, main tasks, essential requirements, preferred requirements, application instructions and closing date into a private working note. Do not assume that every item has equal weight. A required licence is different from a preferred software tool. Mark any requirement you do not understand for research.

Describe the employer's task in everyday language. For example, an office assistant may need to keep records accurate, respond politely to enquiries and coordinate appointments. This is more useful for selecting evidence than writing "I want any job." A general master CV is useful as a record, but the version you submit should have a clear target.

Build an evidence bank

List things you actually did in jobs, study, volunteering, projects, community activities or other relevant responsibilities. For each example, record the setting and date, your action, tools or methods, scope, outcome and how you know. Evidence may be a completed assignment, a rota, a public project, a supervisor's feedback or your own accurate record. Keep confidential records private; you do not need to attach them to a CV.

Use three labels in your notes: ready to claim, verify first, and learning goal. "Used Excel filters to check a class dataset" may be ready to claim. "Advanced Excel" is too broad unless you can demonstrate what it means. "Want to learn SQL" is a learning goal, not a current skill. Never turn a future plan into completed training.

Map one genuine example to each important requirement. If no evidence exists, leave the gap visible in your planning. You can pursue a suitable learning project or choose a better-matched role. Do not change a job title, invent employment or claim a qualification to make the map look complete.

Select rather than collect

Choose evidence for relevance and clarity, not only prestige. Running the sign-in desk at a community event can show organisation if you explain the action. A hobby without any relevant detail may add little. Save unused material in your evidence bank so future applications are easier.

Your first deliverable is a one-sentence target and three strong evidence matches. The point is to make later writing easier: each sentence on the CV should have a reason to be there and an accurate story behind it.

Worked example

Fictional vacancy: an entry-level office assistant will update spreadsheets, answer visitor questions and arrange appointments. Spreadsheet experience is essential; database experience is preferred.

Fictional evidence: Morgan checked a 60-row class project spreadsheet, volunteered at a visitor desk and kept a shared calendar for a student society. Morgan has never used a business database.

Evidence map: spreadsheet accuracy → checked entries and flagged missing values; customer communication → answered visitor questions and referred complex enquiries; scheduling → updated the society calendar. Database experience → gap, not a claim.

Target sentence: “Entry-level office assistant role where I can use accurate record keeping, visitor support and calendar coordination.” This is a planning sentence. The CV profile can be shorter and supported by the evidence selected.

Your practice

1. Choose a vacancy or use the fictional office assistant vacancy above. Write its three most important requirements.
2. Write five genuine examples from your own life. For each, name your action and the evidence that supports it.
3. Match one example to each requirement. Mark anything uncertain as verify first.
4. Write one sentence naming the role you are targeting. Keep it with your evidence bank.

Completion check: You can explain each of your three evidence matches without adding a claim that you cannot support.

Knowledge check

Choose one answer. The answer key after the final assessment explains every question.

1. A vacancy says a licence is essential, but you do not have it. What should you do?

- A. List it because you plan to obtain it.
- B. Leave the gap visible and check eligibility or choose a suitable role.
- C. Hide the requirement in small text.

2. Which item is ready to claim if it accurately describes your work?

- A. Expert in every spreadsheet tool.
- B. Managed a major business transformation.
- C. Used spreadsheet filters to identify missing entries in a class project.

3. What is the best reason to keep an evidence bank?

- A. It helps you select accurate examples for different applications.
- B. It means every example must appear on every CV.
- C. It replaces reading each job advertisement.

Lesson 2 Build clear CV sections

Estimated 35 minutes including exercise and three questions.

- Choose sections that make relevant evidence easy to find.
- Record titles, dates and qualification status accurately.
- Write a short evidence-based profile and skills section.

Create a useful order

Start with your name and practical contact details in the document body. A professional email address, an appropriate phone number and a broad location can be enough for a general job CV. Add a relevant portfolio or professional profile only when it is current and safe to share. Check every link. Follow anonymised recruitment instructions when they ask you to remove identifying details.

Use familiar section names such as Profile, Experience, Education, Projects and Skills. Choose the order that helps this reader. If your relevant work is your strongest evidence, place Experience early. If you are applying for your first job, Education and Projects may deserve more space. Within a dated section, show the newest item first.

Most general CVs can be concise, often one or two pages, but application-specific limits take priority. Do not add material just to fill a second page. Do not delete crucial eligibility evidence simply to imitate the one-page samples in this course.

Write facts the reader can interpret

For each experience entry, include your actual title, organisation or clearly labelled project context, and dates. Use one date style consistently, such as Sep 2025 to Jun 2026. Separate paid work, volunteering and independent practice when the distinction matters. A personal project must not look like a job for a client.

For education, use the real qualification title and institution. Mark an unfinished course as in progress and an anticipated completion date as expected. Mention a grade only when accurate and useful. A short course attendance certificate is not a professional licence. List only relevant training that you genuinely completed or are currently taking.

A skills list should be specific enough to explain. “Spreadsheets: sorting, filtering and simple formulas” is clearer than “IT expert.” Language levels should reflect what you can actually do, using a recognised scale only if you can apply it accurately. Avoid decorative percentages or star ratings that have no defined meaning.

Keep the profile purposeful

A profile is optional. If you use one, make it two or three short lines that link your background to the target work. Name useful experience or skills and a plausible direction. Replace unsupported adjectives with evidence. “Reliable and brilliant team player” tells the reader little about what you have done.

References usually do not need space on a general CV unless requested. Obtain a referee’s agreement before sharing their details through the employer’s appropriate process. Requirements differ, especially for academic applications. A CV is not an identity file: avoid identification numbers, bank details and unnecessary personal information.

Use the sample closest to your situation to understand the order. Then rebuild it with your facts. Deleting a section that does not apply is better than filling it with invented content.

Worked example

Fictional weak profile: “I am a hardworking expert looking for a challenging role in a great company.” It makes broad claims and gives no reason to select this applicant.

Fictional revised profile: “Business administration student with experience organising a campus event and checking spreadsheet records. Seeking an entry-level office support role.” The education status, activities and target are clear.

Fictional education entry: “Diploma in Business Administration, Example College | Sep 2025 to Jun 2027 expected.” The word expected prevents the entry from implying that the qualification is already awarded.

Possible order: name and contacts; profile; education; relevant projects and volunteering; skills. An applicant with substantial relevant employment could put experience before education.

Your practice

1. Open the blank CV template. Replace the name and contact placeholders with your own details in a private copy.
2. Choose a section order for your target role. Delete sections that do not apply.
3. Create one accurate education entry and one experience or project entry. Use consistent dates.
4. Draft a profile of no more than three lines, or omit it if it repeats the rest of your CV.

Completion check: Every entry shows what it was, when it happened and whether it is completed, ongoing, paid, voluntary or independent where relevant.

Knowledge check

Choose one answer. The answer key after the final assessment explains every question.

1. Which qualification entry is clearest for an unfinished programme?

- A. Degree completed, even though you are still studying.
- B. Course title, institution and expected completion date.
- C. A qualification title with all dates removed.

2. What should determine section order?

- A. The first template you find online.
- B. Alphabetical order of section names.
- C. The evidence most relevant to the role and any application instructions.

3. Which skills entry is most useful?

- A. Spreadsheets: sorting, filtering and simple formulas.
- B. Computer skill: 95%.
- C. Excellent at technology.

Lesson 3 Write honest achievement bullets

Estimated 40 minutes including exercise and three questions.

- Turn duties into specific action statements.
- Use trustworthy measures and qualitative results.
- Represent your contribution to team work accurately.

Explain what you did

A duty describes what a role involves. A useful CV bullet shows what you did in that role. Start with an accurate action verb, name the task and add relevant context. When you know the result, include it. A practical pattern is action + task + method or scope + supported result. You do not need all four parts in every sentence.

Choose verbs that fit your responsibility: prepared, checked, answered, organised, updated, compared, tested or supported. Use led only when you actually led. For a current ongoing responsibility use present tense; for a completed activity use past tense. Keep sentences compact enough to read without decoding jargon.

Ask four questions before rewriting a bullet: What did I do personally? What was the setting or scale? How did I do it? What can I truthfully say happened? Your answer can show value without making every task sound like a dramatic transformation.

Use numbers carefully

Numbers can describe workload, scope, time or results, but they are not compulsory. “Prepared materials for four workshops” says something useful about scope. “Increased engagement by 80%” is a result claim that needs a defensible baseline, period and measurement. Do not add a percentage because a CV checker asks for one.

If you use a calculated improvement, understand the calculation. Reducing a task from 50 minutes to 40 minutes is a reduction of 10 minutes; 10 divided by the original 50 is 20%. This example is arithmetic practice, not a claim you should copy. Do not attribute the whole change to yourself if several factors contributed.

When a measure is unavailable, describe the output or process you can verify: “Created a checklist used by the volunteer team at each event.” If you know only that you created the checklist, stop there. Do not add “eliminated all errors” without evidence. Protect confidential business information; use approved general descriptions if needed.

Show your own contribution

Team achievements belong in a CV when your contribution is clear. “Supported a four-person team by checking the final presentation for source accuracy” is precise. “Delivered the entire project” would be false if you did only that check. Credit scope honestly even when the result was shared.

Improve a weak bullet in two passes. First make it accurate and specific. Then remove repetition and unnecessary words. Avoid copying the wording of a job description as if you have already done those duties. If you use a writing tool, compare every suggested sentence against your evidence bank and reject invented claims.

Before keeping a bullet, imagine an interview question: “Tell me how you did this.” If you cannot answer comfortably and truthfully, revise it. You are aiming for useful evidence, not maximum impressiveness.

Worked example

Fictional source note: "At a college event I maintained the sign-in spreadsheet for 45 attendees. I checked paper forms against the file and asked the organiser about unclear names. I do not know whether this reduced errors."

Weak bullet: "Responsible for administration." It names a duty but hides the actual work.

Supported revision: "Maintained the sign-in spreadsheet for 45 event attendees, checking entries against registration forms and flagging unclear details." This states action, scope and method without inventing an outcome.

Unsupported revision to reject: "Transformed event operations and reduced errors by 100%." Neither the transformation nor the percentage is established by the source note.

Your practice

1. Choose three examples from your evidence bank. Write one action bullet for each.
2. For any number, note where it came from and what it measures. Remove numbers you cannot justify.
3. Underline your personal contribution in each bullet. Check that team outcomes are not presented as solo work.
4. Read each bullet aloud. Remove generic adjectives and explain any jargon.

Completion check: You have three concise bullets with support for every action, date, number and outcome.

Knowledge check

Choose one answer. The answer key after the final assessment explains every question.

1. You know you made a checklist but did not measure its impact. Which bullet is safest?

- A. Created a checklist for preparing workshop materials.
- B. Reduced mistakes by 70%.
- C. Guaranteed flawless workshops.

2. A task took 50 minutes before and 40 minutes after a change. What is the percentage reduction?

- A. 10%.
- B. 20%.
- C. 25%.

3. You checked the sources for a team presentation. How should you describe it?

- A. Claim you led the entire project.
- B. Remove it because team work never counts.
- C. State that you checked source accuracy as your contribution to the team.

Lesson 4 Adapt the CV to your starting point

Estimated 35 minutes including exercise and three questions.

- Present student and first-job evidence without inventing employment.
- Prioritise relevant early-career accomplishments.
- Explain transferable skills and career changes with concrete evidence.

Student or first job

A short employment history does not mean you have no useful evidence. Study projects, community work, volunteering, clubs and suitable personal projects may show skills. Explain the activity and what you did. Use labels such as Academic project or Volunteer so a reader understands the context.

For an early application, choose a small number of relevant examples and describe them clearly. A class project may show spreadsheet work or presentation skills. A community event may show organisation. Avoid turning everyday activities into inflated job titles. You do not need to disclose private family circumstances to prove that you are responsible.

The student sample in this course uses education, a class project and volunteering. Its organisations, people and activities are fictional teaching examples. Copy its structure if useful, but never copy its qualifications, dates or achievements as your own.

Early career

Once you have relevant employment, give the strongest recent role enough space. Select bullets that show useful tasks, tools, outputs and accurate outcomes. Older or less relevant work can have fewer bullets. Keep actual job titles; if a title is unclear outside the organisation, add a brief plain-language explanation without upgrading seniority.

Update the CV as you gain evidence. Remove school-level detail that no longer helps if newer experience is more relevant. A shorter list of specific abilities is more useful than a long list of generic qualities. Keep a private master record so you do not lose older material that may fit a later role.

The early-career sample targets administrative work. Notice that each bullet describes practical activity, such as maintaining records or preparing meeting notes. It does not invent revenue impact simply because the work supports a business.

Career change or return to work

For a career change, identify tasks that carry across roles. Hospitality scheduling may be relevant to office coordination; handling customer questions may support a customer service application. Name the original setting and explain the relevant action. A transferable skill is a connection you can demonstrate, not a new professional credential.

Keep employment dates visible even if you add a short Relevant skills or Projects section near the top. A practice project can help show new skills, but label it independent practice and describe its limitations. Completing an introductory exercise does not make you an experienced practitioner.

Explain a career break briefly when useful or requested, using truthful wording at a level of detail you are comfortable sharing. Do not alter dates to hide it. You can write “Career break” with dates and add relevant activity if accurate; there is usually no need to place medical details or other sensitive reasons on a general CV. Seek local advice for unusual application requirements.

The career-change sample connects hospitality operations to office support and labels its spreadsheet project as independent practice. Its profile expresses a direction without claiming that the person already holds an office role.

Worked example

Fictional case: Taylor wants to move from hospitality shift supervision into office coordination. Taylor allocated daily tasks, kept a rota and passed supplier messages to the manager. Taylor has no bookkeeping qualification.

Relevant connection: “Updated weekly rotas and communicated shift changes to a team of six.” This may support scheduling and clear communication.

Practice evidence: “Independent spreadsheet project: created a sample stock log using fictional data and checked formulas against manual totals.” This shows a learning activity without claiming paid finance experience.

Boundary: Taylor should not write “Qualified bookkeeper” or “Office manager.” The original job title and the project label keep the change credible.

Your practice

1. Compare all three sample CVs. Choose the structure closest to your current evidence.
2. Write two sentences explaining why that structure fits your target role.
3. If changing fields, map two existing actions to the new role and identify one genuine skill gap.
4. Check each activity label and qualification status. Remove copied example facts.

Completion check: Your draft makes your real starting point clear and shows relevant evidence without changing the meaning of your history.

Knowledge check

Choose one answer. The answer key after the final assessment explains every question.

1. Which label is appropriate for a self-directed learning exercise?

- A. Independent practice project.
- B. Paid client assignment, even if no client existed.
- C. Professional certification.

2. What is a strong way to show a transferable skill?

- A. Say you can do every job.
- B. Describe a genuine action from your earlier role and connect it to the new task.
- C. Change your previous job title to match the vacancy.

3. How should you handle a gap in employment?

- A. Invent a job to cover it.
- B. Change the dates of an earlier role.
- C. Keep dates accurate and provide a brief truthful explanation when useful or requested.

Lesson 5 Make the document readable and easy to process

Estimated 30 minutes including exercise and three questions.

- Apply a simple consistent layout.
- Understand what an applicant tracking system may do.
- Check exported files for readability and text order.

Design for a quick read

Use a clear, common font and a readable body size; 11 or 12 points is a practical starting point. Make your name prominent, use consistent headings and leave enough space between entries. The samples use a single text column because it gives a straightforward reading order and is easy to edit.

A CV does not need icons, a photograph, skill charts, decorative sidebars or a background image to communicate evidence. Photographs and personal details follow different conventions in different countries, so check local guidance. In this course the general-purpose samples omit photographs and unnecessary personal details.

Use real text rather than a screenshot of your CV. Keep essential contact details in the body instead of relying on headers or footers. Use normal paragraph and bullet formatting. Do not make body text tiny to fit more content; shorten low-priority material or use another page if the instructions allow it.

Understand ATS limits

An applicant tracking system, or ATS, is software an employer may use to organise recruitment. Some systems parse documents into fields, support keyword searches or apply employer-defined screening rules. Products and employer settings vary. There is no universal score or format that guarantees selection, and a successful upload does not prove that every field was read correctly.

Use the vocabulary of the vacancy when it accurately describes your work. If the advert asks for customer enquiries and you have answered customer enquiries, that phrase is appropriate. Do not add skills you lack, repeat keywords excessively or hide text in the document. Human readers also need clear, coherent sentences.

A plain single-column format with familiar headings is a cautious general starting point, not a promise that every parser will work. Instructions from the actual employer take priority over generic ATS advice. If a portal asks for specific fields, check and complete them accurately rather than assuming the attached CV has filled them correctly.

Export and test

Keep an editable master file. Submit the file type requested by the employer, which may be DOCX, PDF or another format. If the employer accepts PDF, export a text-based PDF and reopen it before uploading. A PDF usually preserves appearance, but visual appearance alone does not show whether text can be extracted correctly.

Run three checks on the final file: read it at normal size, select and copy the text into a plain-text editor, and verify that the copied order is sensible. Look for missing characters, broken lines, lost contact details and confusing column order. This is a helpful check, not a complete ATS certification.

Review the portal preview and any fields populated from your file. Correct errors if the site permits it. Save your final version and the application instructions together so you can identify exactly what you submitted.

Worked example

Fictional problem: Avery's attractive two-column CV places dates in a sidebar and contact details in a picture. When copied into plain text, the dates interrupt the experience bullets and the email address disappears.

Revision: move contacts into a normal paragraph, place each date beside its own entry, and use a single text column. Keep the relevant evidence; remove only the layout obstacles.

Test: export the revised document, reopen it and copy its text. The email, role titles and dates now appear in the intended order. This fixes the observed problem. It does not prove that every employer's software will process the file perfectly.

Your practice

1. Apply one font family, consistent headings and readable spacing to your draft.
2. Remove unnecessary graphics and check that contact details are ordinary text.
3. Export the file type required by your chosen vacancy. Reopen it and inspect every page.
4. Copy the text into a plain-text editor. Check reading order, dates and contact details.

Completion check: The final file is readable on screen, contains selectable text and follows the employer's stated format.

Knowledge check

Choose one answer. The answer key after the final assessment explains every question.

1. What does a successful plain-text copy test prove?

- A. Every ATS will rank the CV first.
- B. The text was extractable in that test; other systems may still behave differently.
- C. The applicant meets all job requirements.

2. The employer requests DOCX. What should you submit?

- A. A screenshot.
- B. Only PDF because PDF is always best.
- C. The requested DOCX file after checking it.

3. Which use of a vacancy keyword is appropriate?

- A. Use it naturally when it truthfully describes your experience.
- B. Add it in invisible text.
- C. Repeat it many times even when you lack the skill.

Lesson 6 Tailor proofread and submit safely

Estimated 35 minutes including exercise and three questions.

- Tailor a CV against a vacancy without inventing evidence.
- Perform a content and file quality review.
- Share only appropriate information through a verified application route.

Make a role-specific version

Return to your evidence map. For each important requirement, point to the sentence that shows the relevant evidence. If the sentence is missing, add a supported example or recognise the gap. Reorder bullets so the most relevant evidence is easy to find. A new application may need different emphasis, not a completely new history.

Check the profile, section order, skills and bullet details. Remove generic material that crowds out better evidence. Spell out an unfamiliar acronym the first time it matters. Make sure your CV, cover letter and application form agree about dates, titles, qualifications and availability. Answer any application questions separately; a CV is not a substitute for required fields.

Save a clearly named version such as `Firstname_Lastname_Office_Assistant_CV.docx`. Follow any naming rule from the employer. Keep a private master copy and avoid overwriting the only version containing your full history.

Proofread in separate passes

Use a facts pass to check dates, employers, job titles, training status, contact details and numbers. Use a language pass for spelling, grammar, tense and repeated wording. Use a layout pass to inspect every page, including any second page and the bottom of the document. Open the actual file you plan to send rather than only reviewing its source.

Ask a trusted reviewer to answer two questions: What role does this CV target, and what evidence is strongest? Their answer can reveal unclear priorities. Share a redacted copy if they do not need personal contact details. Accept useful edits, but check that new language has not inflated your experience.

Remove tracked changes, comments, unused placeholders and unwanted metadata before submitting. Confirm that the selected attachment is the final version and that all portfolio links open to the material you intend to share. Do not send someone else's contact details without their agreement.

Protect your information

A normal CV should not contain passwords, bank details, government identification numbers or scans of identity documents. Use only the personal details needed for the application. Some employers request additional information later through a verified process; that does not mean it belongs in a broadly circulated CV.

Confirm the application destination using the employer's official careers site or a trusted route. Be cautious if an unexpected message asks for payment, sensitive documents or urgent action. Check the organisation independently before responding. When using online CV tools or AI services, understand what you are uploading and remove unnecessary personal or confidential information.

Review the application before the final submit action. After submitting, save the confirmation, vacancy reference, deadline and the version sent. If no confirmation appears, check the portal status before

submitting repeatedly. Keep a simple application log and use the employer's published instructions for any follow-up.

A stronger CV cannot guarantee an interview or job. What you can control is accurate evidence, relevance, readability and careful submission. Your completed course project is one tailored, proofread CV plus a private evidence bank you can reuse.

Worked example

Fictional vacancy: administrative assistant with spreadsheet record keeping and customer enquiries. Application instructions: DOCX only, no photograph, file named Surname_Firstname_CV.

Fictional draft check: Avery's top bullet describes an unrelated sports interest, the profile still targets retail, and the file is a PDF named final_final2. The relevant record-keeping bullet is buried lower down.

Revision: update the profile truthfully, move the record-keeping and enquiry evidence earlier, remove low-value content and save Example_Avery_CV.docx. Reopen that file, verify facts and inspect every page.

Privacy check: remove a full street address and a referee's private phone number from this general CV. Use the employer's verified application route and provide additional information only when appropriate through its requested process.

Your practice

1. Tailor your draft to the vacancy used in Lesson 1. Highlight each essential requirement in your private checklist.
2. Complete separate facts, language and layout passes. Remove every unused placeholder.
3. Check the destination, required format, filename and attachment. Do not submit a practice CV to a real employer.
4. Create a private application-log entry with role, organisation, deadline, filename and status.

Completion check: You can identify the final file, explain its evidence and confirm that it meets the vacancy's instructions without unnecessary private information.

Knowledge check

Choose one answer. The answer key after the final assessment explains every question.

1. Which item should be excluded from a general CV?

- A. A relevant qualification you actually hold.
- B. An appropriate contact email.
- C. A bank account number.

2. What is the best final attachment check?

- A. Open the exact file you intend to upload and verify its contents and format.
- B. Assume a file named final is correct.
- C. Check only the first page of the source document.

3. What should you do if an unexpected recruiter requests sensitive documents?

- A. Send them immediately to avoid missing out.
- B. Verify the organisation and request independently through an official route.
- C. Post the documents on a public profile.

Final knowledge check

Allow about 20 minutes. Choose one answer per question. Score one point per correct answer, with no negative marking. Aim for 9 out of 12, or 75%. You can review and retake this self-check as often as needed. It is not an accredited qualification.

1. Before choosing CV content, what should you identify?

- A. The target role and its important requirements.
- B. A decorative colour palette.
- C. A way to make every claim sound senior.

2. You helped prepare one class presentation. Which statement is accurate?

- A. Managed the organisation's communications department.
- B. Prepared slides and checked references for a class presentation.
- C. Led corporate strategy for a national business.

3. A qualification will be finished next year. How should you show it?

- A. As already awarded.
- B. Without any indication of status.
- C. With its real title and an expected completion date.

4. Your evidence confirms that you processed 25 forms, but no result was measured. Which bullet works?

- A. Processed 25 registration forms and checked required fields.
- B. Raised productivity by 200%.
- C. Eliminated every error across the organisation.

5. A group won an award, and you organised its presentation materials. What should your CV say?

- A. That you won alone.
- B. That the group won and you organised the presentation materials.
- C. That you founded the award.

6. Which is suitable evidence for a first-job CV?

- A. An invented internship.
- B. A copied sample qualification.
- C. A genuinely completed project labelled with its true context.

7. A hospitality worker is applying for office support. Which approach is strongest?

- A. Connect genuine rota and communication tasks to office coordination.
- B. Rename the old job Office Director.
- C. Claim a professional accounting licence after watching a video.

8. Which statement about ATS software is most accurate?

- A. One template guarantees an interview.
- B. Systems and employer settings vary, so follow instructions and check the file.
- C. Invisible keyword lists are always required.

9. What should you do if the portal parses your employment dates incorrectly?

- A. Ignore it because the file uploaded.
- B. Delete all dates from your history.
- C. Correct the fields if possible and review them before submission.

10. Which change is truthful tailoring?

- A. Move your relevant spreadsheet example earlier for a records role.
- B. Add software expertise you do not have.
- C. Change a completed course into a degree.

11. Which privacy action is appropriate before sharing a CV for feedback?

- A. Include identity scans so the reviewer knows it is yours.
- B. Remove personal details the reviewer does not need.
- C. Add all your referees' home addresses.

12. What marks a ready-to-submit CV?

- A. It has the highest score on any random website.
- B. It is identical to a fictional sample.
- C. Its evidence is accurate, it fits the role, and the actual file follows the instructions.

Answer key and explanations

Lesson 1

1. B. An essential requirement must be treated honestly. A plan is not a licence, and formatting cannot fix an eligibility gap.
2. C. The specific action and context can be checked. Broad expertise and senior responsibility need separate evidence.
3. A. The bank is your source material. Selection and tailoring still happen for each role.

Lesson 2

1. B. An expected date makes the status explicit. Omitting dates or claiming completion can mislead.
2. C. Order helps a reader find the strongest relevant evidence. Templates are starting points.
3. A. Named operations have an interpretable meaning. Undefined ratings and general claims do not show the level of skill.

Lesson 3

1. A. The first statement reports the known output. The other two invent results.
2. B. The reduction is 10 minutes divided by the original 50 minutes, which is 20%. You still need reliable measurements and appropriate attribution before using this on a CV.
3. C. A specific contribution can be valuable. It should not be inflated into leadership or hidden just because others took part.

Lesson 4

1. A. The label accurately identifies the context. Practice is valuable without being misrepresented as employment or certification.
2. B. A concrete action makes the connection credible. Changing a title or claiming universal ability does not.
3. C. Accurate dates preserve trust. A concise explanation can give context without unnecessary sensitive detail.

Lesson 5

1. B. It checks a useful property of the file, not ranking, universal compatibility or eligibility.
2. C. Employer instructions take priority. A different format may be rejected or inconvenient to process.
3. A. Relevant truthful terminology helps explain fit. Hidden or unsupported keywords are misleading.

Lesson 6

1. C. Bank details are unnecessary for a general CV and create avoidable privacy risk.
2. A. The exact exported or saved file can differ from the source. Every page and the requested format matter.
3. B. Independent verification reduces the risk of sharing sensitive information with the wrong recipient.

Final knowledge check

1. A. A role and its requirements give you a basis for selecting evidence.
2. B. The accurate context and action show useful evidence without inventing employment or seniority.
3. C. Expected completion distinguishes current study from an awarded qualification.
4. A. The first option stays within the known action and scope. The others invent outcomes.
5. B. It is reasonable to mention a shared result when your role is clear and the award is real.
6. C. Projects can show relevant skills. They must be presented as projects rather than fictional employment.
7. A. Transferable actions can demonstrate fit. Titles and credentials must remain accurate.
8. B. There is no universal guarantee. Clear content, suitable format and verification are practical steps.
9. C. An upload and a correct parse are different. Review fields for accuracy.
10. A. Tailoring changes selection and emphasis while preserving facts.
11. B. A reviewer can usually assess content and layout without unnecessary personal information.
12. C. Readiness depends on facts, relevance and verified submission requirements, not copying samples or trusting an unexplained score.

Your final CV project

Use your own evidence to create one CV for the vacancy you chose. Keep the evidence bank private. Submit only when you have checked the real employer's instructions and are ready to apply. The fictional practice vacancy does not represent an open job.

Self review rubric

Accuracy: Every role, date, qualification, action and number is true and explainable.

Relevance: The strongest evidence matches the role's important requirements.

Clarity: Sections, dates and bullets are easy to follow, with no unclear status or inflated labels.

Readability: The actual file has readable text, consistent formatting and sensible text order.

Submission care: The filename and format follow instructions; placeholders and unnecessary private details are removed.

For each criterion, mark ready or revise. There is no advantage to passing the quiz while leaving unsupported claims in the CV. Revise any criterion that is not ready.

Submission checklist

- I checked the vacancy and application route.
- I checked all facts, numbers and qualification status.
- I used only my own experience and removed fictional sample content.
- I opened the exact final file and reviewed every page.
- I checked links, contact details, comments and tracked changes.
- I followed the employer's format, page limit and filename instructions.
- I removed unnecessary sensitive data and have permission for any referee details requested.
- I saved the file version and will keep the application confirmation.

After this course

Use the same process for a second vacancy: compare requirements, choose evidence, tailor, check and save a distinct version. Add new genuine achievements to your private evidence bank as you gain experience.

Sources and further reading

These official careers resources informed the general guidance. The teaching examples, exercises, questions and sample CVs are original fictional material. Advice differs by country, role and employer. The source checks below confirm availability on 4 October 2026 and are not a claim that every page was newly published that day.

National Careers Service How to write a CV

Checked 4 October 2026. Guidance on clear writing, contact details, section order and first-job evidence. UK context.

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/careers-advice/cv-sections>

University of Oxford Careers CVs

Checked 4 October 2026. Guidance on role-specific content, CV variants and readable presentation. Requirements vary by application.

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/careers/careers-guidance/job-search-and-applications/writing-applications/cvs>

Harvard Mignone Center Guide to Creating a Strong Resume

Checked 4 October 2026. Guidance on active, fact-based language, relevant experience and consistent formatting. US resume context.

<https://careerservices.fas.harvard.edu/resources/create-a-strong-resume/>

Harvard Mignone Center AI for Resumes and Cover Letters

Checked 4 October 2026. Guidance on treating generated text as suggestions and checking authenticity.

<https://careerservices.fas.harvard.edu/ai-resumes-and-cover-letters/>

University of Oxford Careers References and Referees

Checked 4 October 2026. General UK applications often omit referee details until requested; academic and explicit employer instructions can differ.

<https://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/references-and-referees>