


# Your Guide to Job Hunting



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# UC Careers' services

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

## Appointments

Book an appointment via UC Careers  
[www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

## Career consulting appointments

Work one-to-one with a career consultant to clarify career or study options:

- What is the right degree or course/s for me?
- What can I do with my degree?
- How could I make more of my time at university?
- Should I do postgraduate study?

## Express appointments & Drop-ins

- Express appointments are held Monday to Friday 10am – 12 noon. These are up to 20 minutes per person for assistance with job search queries.
- Drop-ins are for quick queries and are up to 10 mins per person. You do not need to book, simply drop-in. Check online for dates and times.

## Seminars

- Career options.
- LinkedIn.
- CVs, cover letters and application forms.
- Interview preparation.
- Job search strategies.
- Psychometric tests and assessment centre preparation.
- Starting a new job.
- Tailored services to colleges and departments.

## Careers Fairs & Events

- Several on campus events for UC students including Law, Business and Arts, STEM and Volunteering.
- Connect with various prospective employers and further study options. Review and book events via [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

**UC UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY** | **Te Rōpū Rapuara Careers** | **nzuni talent**

Our job is to empower you to build your employability and work-ready skills while you study.  
All services are **FREE** to all UC students and recent graduates.

- One-on-one appointment
- Our Jobs Board NZUni Talent
- Online Career Development Centre
- CV & Interview Support
- Seminars & Workshops
- Employer Recruitment Events
- LinkedIn Checks
- Career Fairs
- Drop-in sessions Every Tuesday & Thursday

<https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/>

## Student & graduate recruitment / immediate vacancies

### Log on now:

<https://uccareers.careercentre.me/welcome/Canterbury-New-Zealand>

Local, national and international employers recruit each year. UC Careers offers NZUni Talent, a web-based jobs board, linking employers, students and recent graduates.

You are automatically registered as a UC student. Following graduation, you can continue to access information on employment opportunities.

Log on using your University IT username and password for information on Student and Graduate Recruitment including:

- Employer Recruitment Presentations.
- Career Fairs and Events.
- Pre-final year students for summer internships, vacation or practical work experience.
- Final year students – recruitment for graduate positions for next year.
- Graduates – immediate vacancies.
- Careers seminars.
- Scholarships.

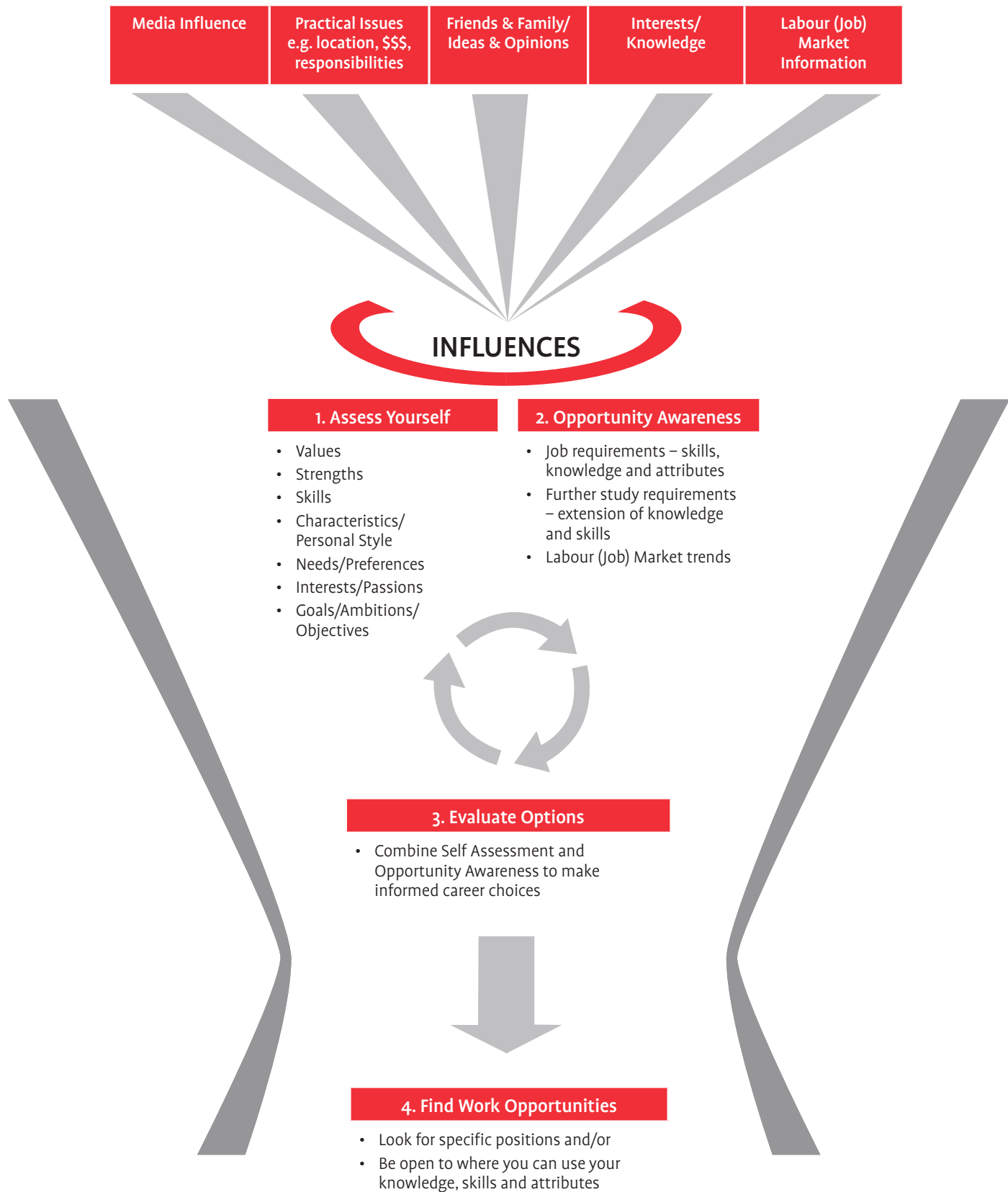
## Online interactive career tools

UC Careers online offers a variety of self-help career information, tools, and resources. These include CV360 (an automated CV check), an interview simulator, career assessments to support career planning, and many employer videos offering you valuable insights. See students' resources and tools at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

## Careers Resource Area

- Employer information.
- Internet access for researching career and employer information.
- Employment destinations of past graduates, by degree major.
- [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers) also contains comprehensive careers and employment information.

# A Career decision making model



# Resources to help with the career decision making process

As a university graduate, you will have a range of career choices. Through academic study you will have developed valuable knowledge and skills, including the ability to think and communicate effectively and a proven ability to learn.

Take the time to work out what your career choices are and what you really want to do, as making an informed decision will contribute to a successful and satisfying career path.

Career choice is an active process and should be a rewarding experience in its own right. Exploring the possibilities involves analysing yourself – what you want and what you have to offer – and finding out about different jobs in the labour market. The Career Decision Making Model provides a framework to help you discover your options.

The resource suggestions listed below can help you with this process.

## 1. Assess Yourself

- Interactive tools such as self-assessments are available online. See resources and tools at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)
- Borrow a career planning book from UC Careers resource area or use available career card sorts.
- Book an appointment with a qualified career consultant via [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

## 2. Opportunity Awareness

- Explore what you can do with your degree at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)
- Develop effective job hunting strategies to learn more about opportunities (see page 10).
- Log on at [www.careerhub.canterbury.ac.nz](http://www.careerhub.canterbury.ac.nz) to learn more about student and graduate recruitment, and immediate job vacancies.
- Attend Employer Recruitment Presentations on campus, as advertised via Events at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)
- Talk with people who work in jobs you would like to do. (See 'Informational Interviews' on page 11).
- Refer to New Zealand and International based career planning and job search websites including:
  - [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)
  - [www.careers.govt.nz](http://www.careers.govt.nz)
  - [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)
  - See Graduate Destination Survey [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/graduate-destination-survey/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/graduate-destination-survey/)
  - [www.nagcas.org.au/resources/graduate-careers-australia](http://www.nagcas.org.au/resources/graduate-careers-australia)
  - <https://online.goinglobal.com/>

## 3. Evaluate Options

Some possible ways to evaluate your options in relation to what you know about yourself and your opportunities:

- Identify the pros and cons of each career choice.
- Complete S.W.O.T. (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis exploring each option.
- Notice your 'gut feeling' and tap into your intuition to guide your decision.
- Think about what decision making strategies you have used successfully in the past to make important decisions and try to apply those strategies now.
- Visualise yourself having made the decision. Imagine yourself in the type of jobs you might like to do. Notice how this makes you think and feel.
- Talk with people you trust to help you make the decision e.g. parents, siblings, lecturers, career consultants, friends etc.

## 4. Find Work Opportunities

- Browse job websites and notice any skill shortages, demands or gaps.
- Identify an area you could contribute to, or niche in.
- Scope the news for employers /organisations.
- Talk to industry professionals for advice (see page 10).

## Co-curricular Record (CCR)

Develop your work-readiness skills by participating in the Co-curricular Record (CCR). The CCR prepares you with the skills employers seek from graduates and provides a record of your involvement in pre-approved activities outside of your academic study. By participating in the CCR you'll not only improve your chances when looking for job opportunities, scholarships and study abroad experiences, but you'll also have fun while developing your skills in teamwork, leadership, communication, problem solving, etc. Every 12 quality hours of active

participation in an activity can be claimed. The CCR is a great way to show employers how you have gone beyond study and engaged with UC and the wider community.

Full details on CCR, available activities, how to register, and how to apply and claim recognition for activities are found on CCR webpages:

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/ccr](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/ccr)

# Student and graduate recruitment

Student & Graduate Recruitment includes Employer Recruitment Presentations, Career Fairs and events, campus interviews and associated activities, and brings to campus a wide range of employers both national and international who recruit:

- Pre-final year students for Summer Internship or vacation work experience which may lead to graduate employment offers.
- Final year students for graduate employment which will commence the following year.
- Students and Graduates for immediate part and full time vacancies.

## Who participates?

Many different types of employers participate in student and graduate recruitment including:

- Large and small organisations
- National and international organisations
- Organisations and companies across all sectors.

Many of these employers seek students and graduates from a wide range of disciplines. Don't make the mistake of thinking, for example, that you need a commerce degree to apply for a commerce position. In the past, graduates from Arts, Science and Engineering have also been accepted for these programmes, so stay open to opportunities.

Another common misconception is that employers are seeking graduates with top academic results. In some cases this may be true, but the majority of employers also consider employability factors such as relevant work experience, skills, strengths, attitude, personality, interests, and team fit.

## What happens?

### Career Events

Keep an eye on what is coming up. See details of Student & Graduate Recruitment and associated UC Careers activities via [www.canterbury.ac.nz/events](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/events)

### Targeted emails

On behalf of employers, UC Careers forwards publicity to specific groups via email. We recommend that you get into the habit of checking your student email address daily.



## Employer Recruitment Presentations

Employers deliver presentations from February onwards to tell students about the student and graduate employment opportunities they are offering. These presentations may take place on campus, online, or "in house" at the employers premises. Employer Recruitment Presentations are held during the day or in the early evening. Some are formal and others are informal however, smart casual dress is recommended.

These sessions may include information about the:

- Organisation
- Nature of the jobs
- What the employer is seeking
- Training and development programmes offered
- Application procedure

Often employers will bring recent graduates with them, so attendance at the Employer Recruitment Presentations is a particularly good way to find out what an organisation is really about and to expand your network of industry contacts.

Students at all levels should attend these Employer Recruitment Presentations. Even if

you're in your first or second year, listening to what employers have to say is a very good way of helping you make decisions about your career direction. It may also provide you with ideas about who to approach for work experience.

Attend a wider range of Employer Recruitment Presentations than those of immediate interest as this raises your awareness of opportunities that you may not have considered. It is particularly important to attend Employer Recruitment Presentations for employers you are making applications to.

NB: not all employers give Employer Recruitment Presentations.

## Recruitment material

Most employers encourage Students & Graduates to visit their website for information about current recruitment opportunities. An increasing number of large employers have a specific website for Student & Graduate Recruitment. All employers recruiting at the University of Canterbury will have their vacancy(s) on NZUni Talent. NZUni Talent job notices give you direct access to these websites. Some employers also provide brochures and handouts about their organisation. These are available from the current Student & Graduate Recruitment display stands at UC Careers.



## Applying

Most employers require you to provide them with a CV, covering letter and a copy of your academic transcript. You may also be asked to complete an application form. An increasing number of employers now require students to complete an online application via their website with copies of your CV etc attached. Additionally a LinkedIn profile can also be requested or preferred by some employers.

Please check the relevant job notice carefully for each individual employer's application procedure and closing date. Follow every instruction. It is vital that your application is correct, complete, and in the right place at the right time. Applications being sent directly to an employer must reach them on or before the closing date. Application details may be in either the employer's Job listing on NZUni Talent, in their recruitment material or on their website. We recommend applying before the last day.

## Academic transcripts

An academic transcript is the official record of your University of Canterbury courses and results to date. Some employers may request to see

the 'official' copy of your academic transcript at the start of the recruitment process and if so they will state this in their application process. Other employers may be willing to accept the 'unofficial' version of your academic transcript during the early stages of the recruitment process, but may require to see the 'official' version of the academic transcript at a later stage of the recruitment process. Check with the employer directly if in doubt.

You can access your internal transcript through MyUC <https://myuc.canterbury.ac.nz>

You can request a copy of your 'unofficial' academic transcript by emailing [transcript@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:transcript@canterbury.ac.nz). This will be sent to you via email and there is no charge. The 'unofficial' version of your academic transcript will display the details of your academic record.

For details on the cost and how to order your 'official' academic transcript, go to:

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/transcripts](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/transcripts)

For online or emailed applications, you can have the 'official' version scanned at the Copy Centre: [www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/onsite-services/printing/uc-print](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/onsite-services/printing/uc-print)

Academic transcripts can take 3–4 days to

process so we recommend students request one early in the year to save last minute hassles. Do not send the original of your 'official' academic transcript to an employer – a copy is sufficient.

## Justice of the Peace

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/onsite-services/jp/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/support/onsite-services/jp/)

If you require a Justice of the Peace on campus to certify copies of original documents please go to the above link.

## Campus interviews

Many employers involved in Student & Graduate Recruitment return to the campus to interview selected applicants, using interview rooms organised by UC Careers.

In most instances the employer will contact you directly to arrange a suitable interview time. Please be flexible when arranging interview times. If you are invited to attend an interview during study breaks or exam time you are able to politely ask for a more mutually convenient time. Employers know that UC Careers will not arrange interviews or assessment testing during study breaks or exam time.

These are formal interviews and employers will expect candidates to dress appropriately and present themselves as if the interview was being held on the company premises. On rare occasions an interviewer might be dressed more casually than you are. If this is the case, don't feel that you have made a mistake. It's better to be over-dressed than under-dressed for this kind of event.

If you choose to withdraw from the interview process or you need to cancel an on-campus interview, you must contact the employer yourself to advise them of your decision.

# Job hunting strategies

To maximise your chances of finding work, we recommend using a combination of job hunting strategies – both advertised and in the ‘hidden’ job market

When embarking on your job search it is important to have an understanding of what you want, what skills you have and how you can contribute. Other career activities and tools can assist in gaining this direction. See [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

## The advertised job market

### The Internet

Many companies and organisations, both nationally and internationally, use the Internet to recruit staff. A few key websites are listed below to help you in your job search:

#### NZUni Talent

[uccareers.careercentre.me/welcome/Canterbury-New-Zealand](http://uccareers.careercentre.me/welcome/Canterbury-New-Zealand) – employment web-based hub between students, recent graduates, employers and UC Careers. Log on regularly for information on job vacancies, Employer Recruitment Presentations, Careers Fairs & events, Seminars and Student & Graduate Recruitment.

#### UC Careers

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/jobs--internships/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/jobs--internships/) – visit the ‘Jobs and Internships’ section for a range of job vacancy links including New Zealand and international jobs, volunteer, relief and international development, academic positions, teaching English as a second language, and teacher, sport and recreation vacancies.

#### General job vacancy websites

When using job vacancy websites you typically can search by keywords, job type/term of employment, location, category/classification and pay/salary. You may be able to register and create a profile to receive job alerts, career news and advice, and be contacted by potential employers.

[www.careers.govt.nz](http://www.careers.govt.nz) – contains comprehensive information on jobs and industries within New Zealand, including job vacancy websites.

<https://nz.indeed.com> – searches all job search sites.

[www.trademe.co.nz/jobs](http://www.trademe.co.nz/jobs) – browse job vacancies within New Zealand.

[www.seek.co.nz](http://www.seek.co.nz) – browse jobs in NZ and internationally.

[www.sjs.co.nz](http://www.sjs.co.nz) – brings employers and students together for all types of jobs around New Zealand.

#### New Zealand Government Jobs

<https://jobs.govt.nz> – lists job vacancies in the government sector. You can also visit websites of individual government departments and organisations. See:

[www.govt.nz/organisations](http://www.govt.nz/organisations)

<https://taituara.org.nz/working-in-local-government> – lists local government jobs. Taituarā assists those who are starting out in their career, as well as those looking to advance.

#### Industry specific Job vacancy websites

- Speak to people within the jobs and industry you are interested in, and ask if they are familiar with any specific job vacancy websites.
- Use keywords/phrases when searching online to connect with industry specific job vacancy websites. For example if you search ‘science vacancy website nz’, Science New Zealand’s career website will be found.

#### Going global

Recruitment and selection processes and practices, including CV/Resume writing, can vary in different countries. UC Careers staff recommend: GoInGlobal – <https://online.goinglobal.com> UC has a paid subscription to this site from any device connected to the UC network. Alternatively, limited public access is available via [www.goinglobal.com](http://www.goinglobal.com).

#### Employer websites

Employers can advertise opportunities through their own websites (including their social media platforms). Often you can sign up to their job mail to be notified of any new vacancies.

#### Professional associations

Professional associations uphold standards and seek to further a particular profession or industry. Becoming a member of an industry specific body allows you an opportunity to engage, participate and to stay up to date with industry knowledge and relevant job vacancies.

#### Publications

Job vacancies, often in specialist areas can be advertised in publications such as professional

magazines, academic journals and newsletters of professional associations. Also try related publications from other industries.

#### Recruitment agencies

See the handout: Top 10 tips for approaching Recruitment Companies available in the Careers Resource Area.

#### Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ)

<http://job-bank.workandincome.govt.nz/find-a-job/search.aspx> – lists job vacancies. You may need to register first with Work and Income as a Job Seeker to be considered for specific roles.

#### Social media

Employers can use various social media platforms to connect with potential candidates and promote job vacancies. Relevant professional associations and influential individuals online can also share opportunities of interest. Ensure any communications on social media are kept professional.

[www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) – a professional networking service used to build connections and facilitate the sharing of job vacancies, news, updates and insights.

[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) – in addition to specific employer pages, search for generic and specific job and industry groups and pages (these can be regional or at a national level, e.g. IT Jobs - NZ).

Other social media platforms employers have been known to use include:

- [www.instagram.com](http://www.instagram.com)
- [www.snapchat.com](http://www.snapchat.com)
- [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)

#### Social Media and Privacy

Be careful about what you share online and who can view your posts - check your privacy settings. There are many stories of individuals not getting a job because of the information they have shared online - once you share a post it may never go away.

Google yourself to see what public information is readily available so you are aware of the information an employer may see.

Manage your social media connections as information that is shared with a connection can be captured and shared with others, including potential employers.



## UC Careers

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

### Job Search Diary

Date	Contact	Discussed	Follow-up	By When?

#### E-Hireability

Learn more about how to manage your online footprint, how to make yourself more e-hireable, how to use social media in your job search, and how to use LinkedIn and build a virtual network. See resources and tools at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

#### Tapping into the hidden job market

The 'hidden' job market refers to jobs which are not advertised, and is particularly important if you are seeking work within organisations who are relatively small or are in highly competitive sectors. You may be familiar with this approach, having successfully gained holiday or part-time work through networking and/or directly approaching an employer.

The following job hunting strategies and activities can assist you in accessing the 'hidden' job market.

#### Networking

Networking involves identifying the people and organisations that could be helpful to you in your job search and developing mutually beneficial relationships with them. Your aim of networking is to:

- Obtain more information about sectors and employers that interest you.
- Decide where best to concentrate your efforts.
- Uncover job leads and key contacts.

When networking it is important to see yourself as embarking on a marketing exercise. The 'product'

you are marketing is yourself and your chances of success in this venture will depend on:

- Identifying the appropriate market for your skills.
- Understanding the specifications and preferences of the employer or industry.
- Presenting positive qualities of your 'product' – your qualifications, skills, abilities and experience – and how these will benefit the employer.
- Your communication and interpersonal skills.
- Being committed to convincing the employer and 'closing the sale'.

You are:

- Finding out about areas of interest, advising people of your range of skills and letting people know that you are looking for work.
- Asking to be part of their network of contacts, to learn from their knowledge and exchange information.
- Using the 'multiplier' principle – that is, the more people who know you are looking for work, the greater the chance of opportunities arising.
- Asking the people in your network to help you in your job search, NOT asking them to hire you.
- Eliciting feedback and assistance so that you can continually modify your skills and techniques of job search.

It is important to use your initiative and get talking to people! Being connected is considered to be the number one job search strategy.

E-learning videos are available online and cover a range of networking topics, including the dos

and don'ts, where to network, making a good impression, overcoming the fear of networking, conversation starters, and tips from employers.

See resources and tools at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

So, how do you get started with Networking?

#### Build your job information database

The first step is to start building your contact list. You want names, contact details and possible openings or positions.

#### Create a Job Search Diary

Write down:

- Every contact you find, how you heard of that person and what you could talk to them about.
- Communications you have with that person, by phone, email, in person etc.
- Actions you will take as a result of your communication with that person, e.g. other people to ring, ring back in a month's time, send in CV etc.
- Actions that person is going to take on your behalf e.g. going to pass on your CV to their superior.

Diary all important dates. Check your diary every day to see what has happened and what your next step is.

## Contact sources

### People:

- Everyone is a potential contact – just start asking!
- Large numbers of graduates are successful in obtaining work through friends, family, colleagues, past graduates and other contacts, including local business people and community members.

### Information resources:

Look in the Careers Resource Area for information including:

- Print media, employer publications and newsletters.
- Business Directories.
- Research organisations. Visit [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/jobs--internships/external-job-sites/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/jobs--internships/external-job-sites/)

### Other sources:

- Build up contacts in your field of interest through part-time, voluntary, vacation work and work experience.
- Join relevant professional associations and societies and attend professional gatherings.
- Attend relevant seminars, forums, talks, exhibitions and conferences.
- Use social media, such as LinkedIn.
- Speak with Academic staff who may have industry contacts and information about previous employers of graduates.
- Build connections through your leisure interests and further study.

## Informational interviews

The purpose of an 'Informational Interview' is to research a field of work of interest to you – not to ask for a job. It is a way to gain information on employment trends, skills required by employers, as well as confirm whether it is an area of work you are interested in pursuing or not. Informational interviewing increases your knowledge about your fields of interest, helps you clarify and refine your career goals and establish a network of contacts which could lead to employment opportunities, useful mentoring or invitations to relevant industry events.

### Prior to the interview

- Identify businesses to approach by looking at company directories online via: [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/jobs--internships/external-job-sites/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/jobs--internships/external-job-sites/).
- Ask family, friends, clubs and associations

you belong to for contacts.

- Research companies/organisations via their websites and publications so you are familiar with what they do prior to visiting them.
- Contact the appropriate person (via email, telephone or in writing). Contact the receptionist first and ask them to put you through to the most appropriate person if you are unsure who the best person is for you to speak to. Remember to get that person's name and job title.
- Introduce yourself, let them know who referred you (if applicable), what you would like to discuss and ask if you could arrange a brief meeting at a mutually suitable time. Be prepared that the employer potentially might want to speak with you then and there or they may offer to meet with you face to face.
- Be clear about your skills, interests and goals and how this information will assist you in your job search.
- Prepare and rehearse your questions in advance – you may like to email them to the contact person in advance.
- If you are meeting in person, or via video call, dress professionally and appropriately to make a good impression.

### At the informational interview

- Remember this is career research, not a job interview.
- You ask the questions.
- Show interest in them – ask about their background, qualifications and relevant experience.
- Take notes and collect any literature or relevant web addresses.
- Ask for further contacts and ask permission to use their name as your referral source.
- Inquire whether it would be possible to spend a short period work-shadowing someone in a role of interest to you.
- Take along your CV.
- Keep to the time you negotiated.

### After the interview

- Immediately take notes of all the information you have gathered.
- Write a thank you note.
- Keep a comprehensive record of all contacts made.
- Follow up all referrals.
- Keep in contact with the person.
- When you get a job, let people know. They may become part of your network.

## The direct approach

This means approaching employers directly for work, whether in person, by telephone or by sending a cover letter with a CV (by post, email or via websites). This type of activity is used as a legitimate method of finding work in most areas of the labour market.

Accurate targeting is crucial in this approach, so the amount of time you spend researching the company and who to target within it, will be much greater than the amount of time you spend making the contact. As with networking, clarity about what you have to offer, plus a businesslike approach, are essential to making a good first impression.

## When you make contact

- Be explicit about why the job, organisation or industry appeals. In a cold call exercise have your CV prepared, and be able to indicate to the employer your interest in the organisation and the type of position you want, or type of enterprise you are considering starting.
- Use positive language.
- Get the name of a contact rather than just their title e.g. if you are writing to, or emailing, the Human Resources Manager phone the Receptionist to find out their name.
- Follow the principles of writing an effective cover letter and CV.
- Be professional in your approach to the employer.

Sending a CV and cover letter expressing your interest in working for a particular organisation is a popular job hunting technique. As a result employers may be receiving these kinds of approaches daily. Therefore it is important to do some research on the organisation and consider where you might fit into it. Indicating at the end of your letter that you will follow up with a phone call will generally ensure that the letter is read and considered. This also provides you with another avenue for making contact. Aim to build rapport and maintain contact moving forward to keep informed as to whether any job vacancies have emerged that you might be suited to.

## Creating your own job

- In your research you may find an employer who could use your skills even though they haven't realised this yet.
- You need to research the company/organisation's markets, outputs etc and be able to illustrate succinctly how your skills will complement what they do.



- Concentrate on the needs of the company and adopt a positive tone.
- Establish your communication as a serious dialogue between equals.
- You may identify a gap in the market that you could niche in.

## Telephone skills

### Professional introduction

Quickly identify who you are and what you have to offer by developing a summary of your qualifications, skills, experience, achievements, motivations and aspirations. Practice it until it sounds natural and fluent. It should be brief with a maximum time of two minutes. It is important to express your reason for being interested in their organisation.

### While on the telephone

- Check with the other person that you have called at an appropriate time - if not briefly outline the reason for your call and ask when a more appropriate time would be to call back.
- Allow time for the other person to think and respond.
- Smile – it makes you sound friendlier.
- Keep your head up, or stand up. This results in a more upright posture and more energy in your voice. Speak clearly.

- Don't ramble and do take notes. The other person is likely to be busy and will value your efficiency.
- Treat the call as an interview. Be prepared to speak about your skills and how they match the employer's requirements.

### Receiving calls

- Be prepared for calls to come at any time and prepare others in your household if using a land-line. Ensure a good reception for the caller.
- Keep a copy of your CV, your list of questions and pen and paper by the telephone, along with notes about the contacts you are expecting to hear from.

Remember UC Careers is here to help you. Bring some of your planning or research material to an Express Appointment for further advice.

## Informational Interviews

As you are not interviewing for a job, it is up to you to ask the questions. Therefore, **always** go to an informational interview well prepared with questions. Even if the informational interview is very informal or spontaneous, you will get much more out of it if you put time into thinking about what you want to know.

The following questions are a guide.

Ask questions that are going to give you relevant information to assist you to make an informed decision. Remember: use open ended questions that elicit more than a 'yes' or 'no' answer.

- How did you get into this type of work/ industry?
- What kind of background (education, skills, experience and attitude) do people have who work in this field?
- What is a typical day in this job really like?
- What do you most enjoy about the work that you do? Least enjoy?
- What are the biggest challenges facing your sector? How do you think they will be tackled?
- Where do you see the opportunities for people to enter this sector now? What gaps need to be filled?
- What is the best way of finding out about vacancies in this field?
- Do you know of anyone with a similar background to mine that has entered this type of work? Could I meet them?
- Can you recommend two other people that I should speak to?
- Would you mind looking at my CV and telling me if you think it's appropriate for the sector?
- What steps would you recommend I take at this stage?
- Are there related fields/jobs you recommend I look into if there are few jobs available in my preferred career field?

# Researching the organisation

## Possible questions to research

When approaching an organisation for a job, or when invited to attend a job interview, it is important to have background knowledge of that organisation. Researching a prospective employer demonstrates your level of interest in working for them and enables you to show a 'match' between you and their organisation at the job interview.

Some of the information you might want to research may include:

- What type of business they are.
- Where they operate from, where they have branches, subsidiaries etc.
- What their major products and/or services are.
- Who their clients/customers are.
- What their future prospects and plans are.
- Current issues and challenges, for that company, specifically, and for the industry.
- What their financial situation is.
- What the name of their Personnel or Human Resources Manager is.

So, how can you identify organisations to research? Refer to the resources listed below. Research on some small businesses may not be as easily accessible through the sources mentioned; however, it is still important to find out as much as possible before your interview. Ask your industry contacts (colleagues, lecturers, other students, community members) what they know about the business. If possible, speak to someone who works for the organisation.

## Information sources

### Organisation websites

For a start, check out whether the organisation has a website. Use a search engine or one of the online directories to locate their website. See [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/jobs--internships/external-job-sites/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/jobs--internships/external-job-sites/). Read the information provided on organisation websites and consider the questions listed above.

Most organisations have their annual report accessible on their website. Typical website headings under which annual reports can be found include: investor information, corporate information, about our business and financial information. Also look for information about the organisation's purpose and values, and their current projects.



### Social Media

Don't forget to use social media channels for references to, or posts by the organisation you're researching. These sources can give extra insight into the values and activities of the organisation, and public perception of them.

### UC Careers Resource Area & Website

#### Organisation information

In the Careers Resource Area, brochures, newsletters, and other literature are sometimes supplied by employers recruiting during Student & Graduate Recruitment. Some companies and organisations will have websites specific to 'graduate recruitment' or 'careers.'

#### Publications and directories

In the Careers Resource Area you will find publications and directories you can read, such as:

- The NZ Company Register. An Investment Yearbook of NZ companies listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange plus top Australian Companies.
- NZ Government Sector Directory.

- TAKOA Ruo Mano – Information on Marae, Iwi, Social Services, Business, Justice, Education, Government, Training, Arts, Health Services and Education Scholarships.

### Puaka-James Hight/Central Library, University of Canterbury

The Puaka-James Hight/Central library has NZ and international company information and financial reports online. Search by company name via the Library's MultiSearch option [www.canterbury.ac.nz/library](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/library). You can also explore options under the subject guides for Business & Economics and New Zealand History or ask a librarian for help.

<http://canterbury.libguides.com/bsec>

### Christchurch City Libraries

Christchurch City Libraries also provide access to newspaper and magazine articles, annual reports and business directories:

<https://my.christchurchcitylibraries.com/>.

Try searching the "eResources Discovery Search" by company name.

**Please note:** to access information via the Christchurch City Libraries website you may need to be a member. Information on how to join is available on their website.

# Work — international

## Factors to consider

If you would like to work overseas, begin your international job search in advance as it is likely to take some time to plan and organise. How easy it will be to achieve will depend on a number of factors including your ability to get work permits for other countries and the type of work you are seeking. If you are an international student, contact your family and friends to learn more about what is happening in the job market in your home country.

## Finding work overseas

NZUni Talent

Search NZUni Talent for international job vacancies. Select Advanced (under the “Find Jobs” button), to select a country. <https://uccareers.careercentre.me/welcome/Canterbury-New-Zealand>

International job vacancy websites

For a range of international job vacancy websites, visit ‘Jobs and application tools’ at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

This weblink contains information on:

- NZ & International job vacancy websites
- Teaching English as a Second Language
- Teacher and Sport & Recreation vacancies
- Vacancies for Academic positions
- Volunteer, Relief and International Development
- Researching Companies and Organisations
- Job Market Information

Books

UC Careers stock a range of books to assist with finding work internationally. These books are available for loan.

Titles include:

- Careers in International Affairs.
- International Jobs: Where they Are, How to Get Them.
- Teaching Overseas for Aussies and Kiwis.
- The Academic Job Search Handbook.
- Find a Job through Social Networking.



## Applying for jobs internationally

Recruitment and selection processes and practices, including CV/Resume writing, can vary in different countries. UC Careers staff recommend:

**GoinGlobal** –

<https://online.goinglobal.com>

UC has a paid subscription to this site from any device connected to the UC network. Alternatively, limited public access is available via [www.goinglobal.com](http://www.goinglobal.com).

**GradAustralia** –

<https://gradaustralia.com.au/>

Job vacancies, resources and tips for finding graduate jobs in Australia.

In some instances, overseas employers may not be familiar with New Zealand qualifications, so they may require more detail or explanation of your studies in your CV/Resume. They may also require your qualifications to be verified by their country’s qualification authority.

## AIESEC

AIESEC is present in over 124 countries and territories. It offers young people opportunities to participate in international internships, gain experience in leadership, and participate in a global learning environment. An active AIESEC group operates at UC. For further information see: <https://ucsa.org.nz/clubs/find-a-club/>

## International students – working in New Zealand

Please refer to the New Zealand Immigration website to explore your options for working here because they may differ for each individual: [www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/options/work](http://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/options/work)

You may be allowed to work part-time for up to 20 hours a week and full-time during all scheduled holidays and/or during the Christmas and New Year holiday period. Check the conditions on your eVisa, the visa label in your passport, or the explanation in your letter.

After graduation with an acceptable NZ qualification, you can apply for a Post Study Work Visa. Depending on the level of your qualification, the Post Study Work Visa lasts for 1, 2 or 3 years which lets you to do almost any work you like. However getting a skilled job in an occupation where there is a shortage could improve your chances of getting a residence visa if you wish to stay permanently in New Zealand.

**Remember** to check the NZ Immigration website for the most up to date information. You can also seek advice from a licensed Immigration Adviser.

# Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is emerging as an important and viable career option and has the potential to positively shape the career trajectories of many individuals. Entrepreneurship is increasingly becoming a part of the world of work due to its ability to enhance economic growth, innovation, and employment opportunities.

## Becoming an entrepreneur

An entrepreneur generates one or more new business ideas, then through the process of research and development, packages the idea into a new product or service for the market place.

### Career competencies

Self-awareness, career exploration, research, planning, intention building, and implementation of career plans have been identified as important career competencies and are especially important when becoming an entrepreneur. A well-developed identity achieved through self-awareness assists individuals in identifying good career opportunities which complements their values, interests, characteristics and preferences, and can lead to enhanced career development, stability, and success.

### Developing entrepreneurial intention and behaviour

Enhancing a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship, developing self-efficacy, and creating an environment supportive of entrepreneurship, is strongly correlated to individuals following through with entrepreneurial goals and engaging in entrepreneurial behaviours. This can increase capacity for career success. Additionally, being part of an environment which fosters values such

as self-directedness, stimulation, achievement, and universalism, assists in developing a positive entrepreneurial attitude (Yang, Hsiung, & Chiu, 2015).

### Networking and mentorship

Mentoring relationships have been shown to enhance entrepreneurial attitude and motivation, and those with industry mentors have shown more awareness of new business opportunities. Mentoring relationships can be established through social and professional networking, new business contacts, entrepreneurial groups and organisations, and educational settings. Those who participate, engage, and contribute to an entrepreneurial environment may be more successful in establishing beneficial mentoring relationships. (Terjesen & Sullivan 2011)

## Entrepreneurship & employability

Careers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are less defined, and linear career progressions offering secure employment are no longer the norm. This means that individuals need to manage their own careers and recognise and create their own opportunities. Adopting the idea of career entrepreneurship, which refers to identifying unexploited opportunities and making career investments to achieve a higher objective and career reward (Korotov, Khapova, & Arthur 2011), complements personal career development and lifelong learning to maintain employability.

## Commercial & social entrepreneurship

Commercial entrepreneurship previously has been the driving force of most enterprises where the central focus is placed upon the identification of an opportunity and delivery of a product or service. However the concept of social entrepreneurship is increasingly becoming a larger driving force for enterprises around the world. Social entrepreneurship recognises a social issue or need and can be defined as innovative activities with a social objective.

## Entrepreneurial support

### Connecting with national organisations

The following national organisations offer valuable information, support or activities helpful in becoming an entrepreneur:

- New Zealand Chamber of Commerce  
[www.newzealandchambers.co.nz](http://www.newzealandchambers.co.nz)
- Business Mentors New Zealand  
[www.businessmentors.org.nz](http://www.businessmentors.org.nz)
- Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment  
[www.mbie.govt.nz](http://www.mbie.govt.nz)
- Tertiary Education Commission  
[www.tec.govt.nz](http://www.tec.govt.nz)

### Connecting with local organisations

Also investigate local organisations where you reside. Relevant organisations within the Canterbury region include:

- UC Research and Innovation – commercialisation for students  
[www.canterbury.ac.nz/research/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/research/)
- PowerHouse Ventures  
[www.powerhouse-ventures.co.nz](http://www.powerhouse-ventures.co.nz)

### Entrepreneurship at UC

- Te Pokapū Rakahinonga | Centre for Entrepreneurship  
[www.canterbury.ac.nz/business/uce/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/business/uce/)
- Undergraduate study
- Graduate & Postgraduate study options
- Scholarships, Fellowships & Internships
- Getting started



# Cover letters (letters of application)

Cover letters (also known as Letters of Application) are generally used in two job search situations: when applying for an advertised vacancy and when making a direct approach to an employer.

## Advertised vacancies

When applying for advertised or known vacancies, a cover letter should be customised specifically for each position for which you are applying. Never send a cover letter that reads like a circular which is being sent to every employer on a list as it is not likely to make a favourable impression.

In the cover letter, you seek to persuade the employer that you are a suitable candidate for the job, by illustrating you have the key qualifications, skills, experience and personality traits outlined in the job description or at the recruitment presentation.

A well written cover letter will compel the employer to read your CV so they can learn more about you.

## Direct approach to an employer

When making an unsolicited application, it is important that each cover letter is written **specifically for the organisation** you are approaching. Researching the organisation (via websites, through your network of contacts or other resources) is critical to producing a well-focused sales pitch. Through your research, identify what qualifications, skills, experience and personality traits are or might be of interest to the employer you are approaching, and make sure you have highlighted these in both your cover letter and your CV. See the section on the Direct Approach on page 10 in this guide.

## Formatting guidelines

- Avoid coloured or lined paper.
- Use black ink and avoid block capitals.
- Type your cover letter – unless the employer has specifically requested it to be handwritten.
- Use no more than one A4 page (even if you're sending the letter as an email – the employer will probably print it out).

- For an effective layout, use appropriate spacing and margins, and try to balance your letter in the centre (top to bottom) of the page.
- Choose whether using bullet points and/or paragraphs will be the most effective way for you to write your cover letter.
- Keep your sentences short and clear.
- Use size 10–12 text

## Content guidelines

- If you know the name of the person to whom you are sending the cover letter, use their title and name in the salutation (e.g. 'Dear Ms Smith'). Sign your letter 'Yours sincerely'. If their name does not clearly identify their gender, write their full name (e.g. 'Dear Pat Smith') and sign your letter 'Yours sincerely'. If you do not know the name of the person you are writing the letter to, use 'Dear Sir / Madam' and sign your letter 'Yours faithfully'.
- Interpret the organisation's website and literature to demonstrate you understand their needs and how the information applies to you and the job.
- Remember when writing a paragraph that it usually consists of 3–5 sentences and the first sentence of each paragraph needs to introduce what that paragraph is about.
- Make sure you use examples to illustrate what you have to offer.
- Avoid repetition of ideas, words and phrases in sentences. Use a thesaurus or the list of action verbs on page 28. Try to use a variety of sentence structures – don't start every sentence with 'I'.
- Remove bullet points and separate each sentence of your paragraphs onto its own line (temporarily). Does each sentence make sense individually?
- Check each sentence to ensure your grammar, spelling and punctuation are correct.
- Re-paragraph your letter, ensuring that your points are being presented in a logical and structured manner within each paragraph and within the overall cover letter.
- Have someone proof read your cover letter for spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- You may choose to use te reo greetings and sign offs in your letter. This is particularly relevant for jobs in the public sector, education, social work, and many other industries.

## Are you ready to write your cover letter?

- Do you know who to address the letter to? If not – find out, where possible.
- Have you thought about why you want this job and to work for this organisation? Be specific.
- Are you clear on the top 5 or 6 key competencies/skills, experience, qualifications and/or personal attributes the employer is looking for and how you can demonstrate a match between you and the position?
- Have you decided what makes you different or unique? What makes you stand out from other applicants? What are your 'points of difference'?
- Think about how you can interest the employer in what you have to say – what are your 'headlines' to hook them in and interest them in reading your CV?



## Address

Your contact telephone number

2 spaces

5 January 2021

2 spaces

Employer's name

Their position

Company/organisation name

Postal address including post code

City (and country if sending internationally)

2 spaces

Tēnā Koe/Dear Mr/Ms./Mrs Employer's Last Name

## Vacancy position and reference number

### An Introduction

State clearly why you are writing to them (including the department or location preferred, if appropriate) and mention that your curriculum vitae is enclosed. Say where and when you saw the position advertised.

### What I can offer you

Research the organisation and the position to identify what they are looking for. Write two or three paragraphs drawing attention to those aspects of your qualifications, experience, skills, personal attributes, achievements, interests and aspirations which show how you match the requirements of the job and the organisation. Illustrate by using examples. Refer to your CV where appropriate.

### Why does this organisation appeal?

Describe your reasons for applying for this job - what is your motivation to apply to work for this particular organisation, in this particular role. Be specific – why them? It may be their reputation, the projects they are involved in, their organisational culture or other factors.

### The Conclusion

Restate your interest in the position and that you look forward to hearing back from them. Thank them for taking the time to consider your approach or application.

2 spaces

Nāku noa, nā/Yours sincerely

5 spaces (approximately)

### Signature

Your name

Your cover letter is the first thing an employer will read  
– what impression does it give about you?

Use bullet points instead of paragraphs if you think it will get your points across more clearly and effectively.

Note that you do not need to use paragraph headings. Those shown here are just used to illustrate the purpose of each section for the writer.

If you are making an unsolicited approach, mention that you will contact them by a certain date to follow up this letter. If you would like to speak to them about future opportunities in their industry sector overall, clearly request this. This may create a networking opportunity for you to find out more about other jobs.

# Preparing a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

## What is a CV?

A curriculum vitae is a summary of your personal, educational and work history. It is designed to interest a potential employer in interviewing you. The style of CV can vary depending on the stage in your life/career, the type of employer or job vacancy, whether you are canvassing or applying for a known vacancy and if applying for a job in different countries.

In general the most preferred style of CV in New Zealand is a combination of reverse chronological (date ordered) and functional (skills) information, which allows you to arrange the most relevant facts in easy-to-follow and targeted sections. Some employers have particular requirements, so follow their instructions carefully. Below are three easy steps to writing an effective CV.

## Step one: Target your CV

### Research the employer

Research the employer(s) and the industry(s) you are interested in. What do they consider important? What are their values? What type of people work for them? What might interest them?

- Use any sources of information you can find, including websites, press articles, personal contacts, industry forums etc. See page 12.
- Find out if the employer has any specific requirements or preferences in regard to CV format and the order of information included.

### Understand the position description

- If you are applying for a specific position, go through the job description and highlight any qualifications, skills, experience and personal attributes the employer mentions. You need to give examples of where you have demonstrated these in your CV.
- If you're not applying for a specific position, think about what skills, experience and personal attributes the employer is likely to want, based on all the information you have been able to find out about them.

### Match yourself to the job

Brainstorm how your key skills, experience, qualifications and personal attributes fit what the employer is looking for. Prioritise the list and use examples from your work, study, voluntary work, community involvement, interests or personal life (e.g. family commitments) to illustrate your suitability.

### Identify 'scannable' words

- Employers may use an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) that automatically scans your CV to create a plain text file, even when you send a paper copy. This automated process means

your CV may not be read by a human being, unless your CV is successfully shortlisted by an ATS. Therefore it is important that you create a scannable CV.

- Quick tips to create a scannable CV:
  - Include facts for the artificial intelligence to extract. The more skills and facts you provide, the more opportunities you'll have for your skills to match available positions.
  - Make sure you use the same words as the employer when describing your skills and experience as the software may look for those key words. For example, if the advertisement says 'excellent people skills', your CV should have a heading 'People skills' not 'Interpersonal Skills'.
  - Avoid tables, columns and text boxes as these can become scrambled.
  - Use traditional bullet points because ATS can not recognise symbols/picture images.
  - Select one type of standard font to use. You can bold and use a larger font size for headings, however maintain the same font sizes throughout your CV.
- If you're posting a paper copy of your CV, it needs to be good quality, with no unusual formatting or graphics, with dark ink on white paper to make it easy for the computer to distinguish the words.
- E-learning videos and information on scannable CVs and applicant tracking systems are available via resources and tools. See [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers). Also see Resumes in Cyberspace by Pat Criscito and E-Resumes by Susan Britton Whitcomb and Pat Kendall. These are available from UC Careers resource area.

*Acknowledgment: CAREERXROADS 2000 The Directory to Job, Resume and Career Management Sites on the Web.*

## Step two: Content of your CV

### Personal details

- Write your name and term-time home address (if different to your regular address). If you are using two addresses give dates you will be at each one.
- Include your landline (if you have one) and mobile telephone number(s), and your email address.
- Include url address to an online professional profile, e.g. LinkedIn account.
- It may be helpful to indicate whether you are a New Zealand citizen, Permanent Resident or hold a valid New Zealand Work Permit.
- Information relating to age, gender, marital status, religion and health need not be listed for a New Zealand CV.

### Career objective (optional)

- If you wish to include a career objective, place it near the beginning of your CV.
- Make sure it is short and specific to the particular organisation you are approaching.
- Alternatively you may title this section 'Profile' and give a brief summary of your most relevant strengths, skills and experience for the position.

### Education & qualifications

- Include your degree indicating major subject(s), thesis or project title. You can write this in brief and state 'See Academic Transcript attached' and/or include your GPA if you choose.
- Write the name of the institution you are studying at and the year dates. Include information on when you are expecting to complete your studies and be available to commence employment.
- Include secondary school details if relevant. In some cases employers require these. It is not necessary to include copies of certificates and awards from school.
- List any other qualifications or training courses that you have completed and/or are working towards.
- If you are including qualifications gained overseas you should include a brief explanation of them, including whether they have been recognised by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and/or New Zealand Immigration for employment purposes in New Zealand.
- Show the information in reverse chronological order i.e. most recent information first.

## Achievements

- Mention positions of responsibility you have held, such as Class Representative, captain or coach of a team, or any special awards received.
- If you have many school, university and/or any other achievements, consider dividing them into categories such as: cultural, sports, leadership and academic (awards).
- If you are a job seeker who has had family commitments while studying you may want to include these in this section.

## Work experience

- Write the job title, name of employer, location and period of employment (e.g. Nov 2019 – Feb 2020).
- List your most recent position first, and then continue in reverse chronological order.
- Provide a brief description of the responsibilities/tasks of the position. Use action verbs to describe these (see page 28).
- Note the relevant skills you developed and achievements/accomplishments you gained while working for each employer.
- Suggest and interpret how your work experience relates to the employer's activities. Note any special projects or tasks you completed and responsibilities you had.
- Consider dividing this section into 'Relevant Work Experience' and 'Other Work Experience'.

## Key skills/competencies & attributes

- Identify the key skills/competencies the employer is looking for in the position description. Use these as headings. Include examples to illustrate your skills, experience, and personal attributes, giving the employer some context to understand where you have gained or demonstrated these.
- If you choose to give examples of the application of your skills and attributes in both your Work and Key Skills sections, take care to avoid simply repeating the same information.
- Use the STAR principle in writing a skill or competency. That is, think of:
  - A Situation and/or Task you have done. The Action steps you took in that situation and/or task. The Result/outcome.
  - For example: 'Researched, prepared and



delivered a presentation to over 50 students in a management course. Received positive feedback from lecturer and classmates. Achieved an A grade.

## Interests

- Include your interests – sports, cultural groups, hobbies and volunteer work.
- List any clubs or societies you belong to.
- Interests describe aspects of your personality to an employer and highlight your skill development relevant to the workplace (for example, team skills or leadership potential).
- Provide enough detail for the employer to understand the extent of your involvement and achievement in these activities.

## Referees

- List two or three referees. For example, these can be a current or previous employer, a university staff member, or a sports coach.
- Your referees should know you well enough

to support you in your job applications.

- List your referees' names, positions, places of work or their relationship to you, email addresses and telephone numbers on your CV and/or application form.
- Generally, do not attach written references to your application unless the employer has specifically asked for them. However, you can attach one written reference if you think that will 'add value' to your application. Draw the employer's attention to it in your cover letter.
- Always obtain your referees' consent before giving their name and contact details. Offer your referees a copy of your CV and discuss it with them. A copy of the job description and/or advertisement for any position you are applying for is also useful information for referees.

### Step three: Presentation of your CV

#### Impact

- The aim of the CV is to get you an interview. You will have about 30 seconds of the employer's time to make an impact. This means your CV must gain the employer's attention immediately.
- Effective CV's are targeted to the specific employer you are sending it to. This means adjusting it for each application. Create a database/master CV that includes a range of skills/competencies, attributes and experiences from which you can then select the most relevant examples for inclusion in your CV for a particular position.

#### Format/layout

- The design, layout, order and style in which you present your information in your CV is for you to decide, unless the employer has specified any particular guidelines.
- Length of a CV can vary – aim to be as concise as possible. Typically no more than 2–3 pages in length is appropriate in New Zealand.
- Allow plenty of 'white space' on each page, so the CV looks professional, easy to read and not crowded.
- Use clearly defined (bold) headings and subheadings to make it easy for the employer to find the information they're looking for. Keep headings consistent in font style and size throughout.
- Make sure your CV is typed and looks professional. Use white paper to print your CV on as most employers photocopy CV's to give to interview panellists.
- If posting, don't bind your CV but staple the top left-hand corner of the pages together. This enables the employer to easily photocopy your CV if required.
- Typically, employers are asking for CVs to be sent electronically. This can include sending your CV as an attachment to an email or attaching it to an online application form via a link on a web page. Make sure your file is in the format the employer has requested, and that the file name includes your name e.g. 'FredJohnsonCV.docx' rather than simply 'CV.docx'.
- Your cover letter and CV are two halves of the one application so there should be consistency in their format and font.

#### Checklist – before you send cover letter and CV

- Have you demonstrated how your skills, qualifications, experience and personal attributes match the 5–6 main points the employer is looking for, with examples?
- Have you included all the relevant sections the employer has requested and/or that you think are relevant?
- Have you made clear what is unique about you? What makes you stand out from other people?
- In your cover letter, have you been specific about why you want this job, and why you are interested in working for this employer? Have you demonstrated that you have thought about the job, the organisation and the industry and identified the fit with your own aspirations?
- Have you asked someone else to read through your cover letter and CV? Do they give the impression you want to make to the employer?

#### Content tips

- Present information in order of relevance to the employer. For example, if previous work experience is not particularly relevant to the employer or the position, put your key skills section before your work experience.
- Make sure your cover letter and CV complement each other. Remove any unnecessary repetition.
- Make sure your unique attributes are clear.
- Use the Action Verb List (see page 28) to minimise word repetition.

#### Check over and proof read

- Check grammar and spelling very carefully. Don't rely on computer 'spell checks' to pick up all errors.
- Ask someone else to check it over, as you can often miss your own spelling and grammatical mistakes.
- Access UC Careers services via [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)
  - Use the CV360 tool to automatically scan your CV for instant feedback.
  - Attend an express appointment or drop-in to get your CV checked (see page 3) by a Career Consultant.



**Tip:** Develop a database / master CV containing sections for each of your skills with examples of where you've demonstrated those skills, then copy and paste the relevant sections into each new customised CV as appropriate.

**Tip:** Employers who recruit through Student & Graduate Recruitment often require full course details on your CV, and/or a photocopy of your academic transcript.

**Tip:** You have 30 seconds to make the right impression with an employer – use it well to gain their attention and interest immediately, highlighting your suitability and 'points of difference'.

## Hints for specific situations

### Academia

Academic CVs need extra sections covering your academic achievements, research and teaching interests, publications, conference attendance and presentations. An academic CV may not need to include a key skills section. Ask for our handout *Considering a Career in Academia*.

### Adult students – changing career direction

- Review your work experience and the requirements of the job you're applying for, and decide how much detail to put in. Don't include details of education or work experience from more than 10 years ago, unless it is directly relevant to the position you are applying for.
- The main rule still applies – you need to make it obvious to the employer that you have the key skills and experience for the position. If your work experience is recent and relevant to the position, you may want to prioritise that section and include relevant skills within your description of the work experience. If you're looking to change direction and your work experience is not directly relevant to the position, prioritise your relevant skills section and keep your work experience short and concise.

### Engineering

- Put details of your engineering experience immediately after your education details and achievements, perhaps in a separate section to your other work experience. Any work you have done as required by your degree can be counted as relevant engineering work experience, along with any additional engineering work experience you have done.
- Engineering employers want graduates with strong written and oral communication skills, as well as engineering expertise. Your CV and cover letter are your opportunity to show the effectiveness of your written communication skills.

**Tip:** Posting e-résumés on the web is a popular job search technique. This allows employers to access your information and contact you without you having to search for every vacancy. LinkedIn is a popular tool for achieving this ([www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)).

### Government

- Government departments often ask for evidence that you possess specific competencies, which they specify in the job description. You must provide a detailed answer for each competency, highlighting how you possess the skills and experience they are looking for.
- When describing examples of where you have demonstrated a particular competency, use the STAR principle: outline the **Situation/Task**, describe the **Actions** you took and finish by mentioning the **Result** (see page 19).

### Graphic design or 'creative' roles

- If being visually creative is a large part of the job you're applying for, be creative in the appearance of your CV in your use of colour, fonts, space, graphics etc.
- The information must still be clear, easy to read and logically presented. The CV must also photocopy well, so make sure any colours used don't cause information to disappear after photocopying (e.g. text on a bright background might not be legible after photocopying).
- Your CV is a showcase for your design skills – think about what impression you want to give.

### International employment

- If you're looking for work internationally, be aware that CV styles may vary in different countries. Also, overseas employers may not have experience with New Zealand qualifications and may require more detail or explanation of your studies.

If you are applying for jobs in other countries use the Going Global website. UC has a paid subscription to this site, which you can access by using the link <https://online.goinglobal.com/>

from any device linked to the UC network. This enables you to find over 100 pages of job search related information for over 35 different countries. Alternatively, limited public access is available via [www.goinglobal.com](http://www.goinglobal.com).

- Explore overseas job vacancy websites via 'Jobs and application tools' at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

### Law

- Law firms frequently want to see a full academic history, including full university and high school results. Include the results in reverse chronological order in your CV and attach a copy of your university academic transcript as well. Check if the employer has asked for certified copies of transcripts – these need to be signed by a solicitor or Justice of the Peace.
- Law employers may also want to see written school references/testimonials and test results. Make sure you provide exactly what the employer has asked for.
- Although grades are important, law firms may be looking for a history of solid, not necessarily outstanding, achievement, and a good culture fit. They often want people who are enthusiastic and energetic, well-rounded and with a balanced lifestyle, so also include details of your achievements, hobbies and interests.
- Make sure there are no mistakes and the CV flows well – lawyers have to be careful, accurate, pay attention to detail and communicate effectively. Does your CV illustrate your ability to do this?

### Marketing, sales, advertising

- Jobs in these areas require you to be persuasive. Your CV and cover letter are examples of your ability to market yourself – use the skills you've learned in your degree, as well as your innate abilities, to show how effectively you can present yourself.

**Tip:** Come and talk to UC Careers if you need assistance with your CV. We are here to help you.

# WILLIAM JORDAN

28 Clyde Road, Christchurch 8140  
(03) 364 1234 or 021 234 5678  
william.jordan@gmail.com | www.linkedin.com/in/willjordan12

## EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

2019 –	University of Canterbury	Bachelor of Commerce, majoring in Management
2014 – 18	Lakeside College	NCEA Levels 1, 2 & 3 endorsed with excellence. Year 13 Subjects: Maths, English, Economics, Geography and Japanese

## KEY SKILLS / COMPETENCIES

### Interpersonal Skills

- Working at Coffee Culture and McDonalds developed excellent customer service skills and an ability to get along with many different types of people.
- An ability to relate well to people and help them cope with new situations as shown by mentoring other students while at university.
- An appreciation of and sensitivity to the many differing perspectives on the world through living with flatmates from multiple cultures and traveling through Europe.

### Communication Skills

- Clear, high quality written communication as demonstrated by achievement of B average grades in essays and reports for Management and Marketing University courses.
- Effective listening and oral communication skills developed through delivering seminars and presentations at University, mentoring other students, and café work.
- Successfully adapted to several non-English speaking cultures while on a gap year travelling and working throughout Europe for a year.

### Teamwork Skills

- Achieved grade B+ in University project in third year, working in a team of four to research a company and develop a marketing plan.
- Longstanding commitment to being a team player and ability to develop teamwork in others through playing in a hockey team at school and University, rising to coach the B team in 2019.
- At each workplace in NZ and overseas, made a positive contribution to the work environment by being reliable, flexible, supportive and friendly towards work colleagues.

### Problem Solving Skills

- Received an A grade for a University management assignment. Wrote a concise report that analysed the issue, provided an outline of two options with strong reasoning for implementation of the preferred option.
- Managed customer complaints in hospitality roles by listening, ascertaining the problem and finding an appropriate solution, liaising with the manager when necessary.
- Analysed the hockey team's performance and devised training routines to deal with any problem areas as part of my responsibilities as coach.

**A** You don't need to include age, gender, marital status or health status.

If you were born overseas and have citizenship, Permanent Resident status or a work permit, it is helpful to indicate this.

**B** Make sure your telephone messages and email address give an appropriate impression to an employer.

**C** Reverse chronological order (most recent first) for your Education and Qualifications and Work History sections.

**D** Some employers, especially law firms, require full details of your school and university results.

**E** Key skill sub-headings need to match the skills, attributes and experience the employer is looking for as highlighted in the position description.

**F** Use action verbs to describe situations or tasks you have done, followed by the outcome/results. This will provide evidence that you have used the skill in a number of different settings or for different purposes.

**G** It is wise to include a header or footer with your name, the date and page number, in case the pages of your CV get separated.

Layout should be clear, with consistent fonts, margins and white space to make the CV easy to read.

## RELEVANT ACADEMIC PROJECTS

- 2021
- Group research design and statistical analysis – reviewed New Zealand's retail industry performance and researched trends to inform management decision making within sector.
  - Case study – completed literature review and summarised key improvements the identified company could implement to achieve sustainable development targets.
  - Marketing case presentation – undertook market opportunity analysis for the identified company and developed a six month strategic marketing plan.
- 2021
- Case study – identified suitable marketing approaches to support business objectives.
  - Assignment – completed literature review on how consumers make decisions; explored topics such as consumer motivation and how to retain their loyalty.

## H ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2021 Mentor for new students at University of Canterbury I
- 2020 Student representative for the Management Department
- 2020 Coached the Canterbury University Hockey B team

## J EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

- J Feb 2019 – **Waiter/Barista Coffee Culture, Christchurch**
- K L • Provide outstanding service to customers and make coffees, offer drinks, and prepare food
  - L • Maintain high levels of hygiene and cleanliness in the café
  - L • Contribute to café atmosphere by being friendly, cheerful and enthusiastic.
- Jan 2018 – **Waiter/Barista/Barperson Various Employers M**
- Feb 2019 • Served customers drinks and/or food in a variety of cafés and bars in Europe (temporary jobs while travelling)
- Jan – Dec 2017 **Kitchen Hand/Server McDonalds, Christchurch (part time, after school)**
- Took customer orders and served customers
  - Cleaned kitchen and restaurant.

## INTERESTS

- N
- International travel – spent year between school and University travelling round Europe, learning about different cultures, customs and languages.
  - Playing hockey and social tennis several times a month.
  - Sailing – member of Christchurch sailing club since 2013.

## REFEREES

- O
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Dr Fred Bloggs</b><br>Senior Lecturer, Department of Commerce<br>University of Canterbury,<br>Christchurch 8140<br>03 366-7001 Extn. 1234<br>fred.bloggs@canterbury.ac.nz | <b>Ms Sonia Smith</b><br>Manager, Coffee Culture<br>Christchurch<br>03 123-1234<br>s.smith@coffeeculture.co.nz |
|--|--|

H Order the sections according to what you think will interest the employer most. Mention positions of responsibility, awards and scholarships. Include school achievements if relatively recent.

I Consider your 'points of difference' – what makes you stand out from others?

J Consider separating your most relevant work experience into a 'Relevant Work Experience' section. Then have an 'Additional Work Experience'.

K List your most recent position first and work backwards.

L Your description of tasks & duties should be brief and clear. Highlight the transferable skills and attributes you have developed.

M You can group jobs together if you don't think they are particularly relevant to your application.

N Give enough details about your interests to give an employer a clear idea of your level of involvement.

O Employers usually ask for the names and contact details for two or three referees. Make sure these referees know you well to support you in your application. **Always** get your referees' consent first, give them a copy of your CV and the position description and discuss it with them.

Don't include written references with your CV unless the employer has asked for them.

# Josie Peterson

**A** Term address: 1/14 Ely Street, Christchurch Tel: (03) 365-6421  
Home address: 18 Hill Street, Richmond, Nelson Tel: (03) 544-2132  
(9 June – 14 July)  
Email: josie.j.fields@xtra.co.nz  
Mobile phone: 021 123 123  
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/josiepeterson12

## **B** Career Objective

To develop a career within and contribute to commercial law, drawing upon technologies to enhance how a world-class law firm supports businesses and the economy.

## Education

2017 – Current University of Canterbury, Christchurch  
Completing LLB and BA in December 2021  
Major subjects: Law and Japanese  
**C**

2012 – 2016 Waimea College, Auckland  
NCEA Levels 1, 2 and 3 endorsed with excellence

## **D** Achievements

2020 Finalist in the Smith & Ryan Client Interviewing Competition.  
Semi Finalist in the Celie, Foster & Reese  
Mock-Court Competition  
Awarded the Competent Toast Master Certificate in  
Public Speaking

2018 – 2019 Student Liaison Officer for the Japanese  
Language Department

2016 Chess 'A' Grade Representative for Waimea College.  
Peer support Leader for Year 9 students

## **E** Relevant Work Experience

Jan 2020 – Current Community Law Canterbury  
**Caseworker** (Volunteer)  
**F** Interview clients to ascertain their particular concerns, developing a close rapport with clients from various cultural and social backgrounds. Conduct legal research and problem solving under the supervision of a solicitor and advise client of legal and non-legal options available. Interpersonal, documentation and interviewing skills needed to handle each client's individual needs.

Feb 2019 – Current University of Canterbury Toastmasters Speaking Club  
**Vice-President of Education** (Volunteer)  
Plan and distribute a weekly programme outlining member's responsibilities for club meetings. Developing mentoring programme matching up new and experienced members; monitoring each member's progress and providing constructive feedback. Liaising with other TM Clubs around Christchurch, which includes interclub exchanges and guest speakers. Gained increased levels of confidence and competence in speaking before large audiences, promotion and leading others towards a common goal.

**A** Include both term and home addresses if they are different, and give dates you will be at each one (if appropriate).

**B** A Career Objective, Profile or Highlights section in your CV is optional. The purpose is to give the employer summary information about your career goals, objectives, skills and/or experience. Make it short and relevant to the particular organisation or job.

**C** Reverse chronological order (most recent first). Note: Law students should normally include results back to Year 11 (see page 23).

**D** Your achievements will help make you stand out from other applicants.

**E** Bring your relevant work experience to the employer's attention by putting it in a separate section.

**F** If your work experience is relevant, put in detail to give the employer a clear picture of your skills and experience.



## Other Work Experience

Jan 2017 – Nov 2019 Cash Converters Ltd, Christchurch (P/T)

### Sales Assistant

G

Sold wide variety of second-hand goods to people from various cultural backgrounds and nationalities. Involved merchandising, restocking and cash handling skills and the ability to handle customer enquiries by phone and in person. Developed skills of persuasion, ability to develop a close rapport with customers, and working towards set goals.

G Make sure you highlight the skills you developed in each job, in particular those the employer is looking for.

## Academic Record

2017 – Current	University of Canterbury Bachelor of Law; Bachelor of Arts (Major: Japanese)	
2020	Company Law and the Law of Partnership Employment Law Intellectual Property Law Japanese Language Written Communication in Japanese Japanese Society	A A- B+ B B B
2019	Public Law Land Law Japanese Language Equity and Succession	A- B+ B B
2018	Criminal Law The Law of Contract The Law of Torts Written Communication in Japanese Japanese Language	A- B+ B+ B B
2017	The Legal System Law, Justice and Morality Introduction to Japanese culture Introduction to Japanese literature and related arts Japanese Language	A A B+ C C

H

H If you choose to include full details of your academic history, put it in reverse chronological order (most recent first), and order the grades with the best at the top within each year.

Use a similar layout for school subjects and results if they have also been requested by the employer.

List courses for which you do not yet have final results, but leave the grade blank or put TBA.

## Interests

Touch rugby	I	Regularly play for a University of Canterbury team. Enjoy the teamwork and social aspects of the team as well as the sport itself.
Aerobics		Twice per week for general fitness.
Tennis		School captain, now play socially in summer.
University Drama Society		Actively involved in several productions taking lead roles.

I Interests can also highlight your 'points of difference' to an employer.

## Referees

Mr A D Matthews  
Senior Lecturer  
Department of Law  
University of Canterbury  
Christchurch  
Tel: (03) 366 7001 Extn. 1234  
Email: tony.matthews@canterbury.ac.nz

Mr R L Mitchell  
Manager  
Community Law Canterbury  
Christchurch  
Tel: (03) 123 1234  
Email: r.l.mitchell@canlaw.org.nz

# Teaching CVs



In addition to the general information on writing an effective CV, UC Careers would recommend the following information for a teaching CV. Remember, variations may occur depending on your area of teaching:

## General tips

- Make sure you target your CV to the position description and person specification. If in doubt contact your prospective employer directly and ask if they have any particular requirements.
- Read your prospective employer's newsletter, website and ERO report. Ask your lecturers about their knowledge of schools you are applying to. Talk to classmates who have had teaching placements there. These are all ideal ways to inform your job application process and understand the community that your prospective employer is part of.
- Some prospective employers will accept your CV via email, others won't. Check your prospective employer's preference. This information may be listed at the bottom of the information pack, or ask them.
- Prospective employers might like to meet with you. If appropriate, make an appointment to

hand in your application in person.

- Keep your CV brief – usually no more than 2–4 pages.
- Highlight in your CV your ability to work in a team, and to accept and act on advice given.
- If appropriate for the position, consider how you can use your creativity and imagination in the presentation of your CV to ensure it stands out.
- Ask for feedback on your CV from UC Careers staff. Alternatively an academic staff member at the College of Education may be able to give you feedback. If you use photos of you interacting with children in your CV, remember children must not be identifiable.

## Personal details

- Indicate that you will be applying for your provisional teacher registration number when your official academic transcript has been released. For example, you could state this in your CV in this way: 'Application yet to be actioned' or 'application currently being processed'.
- Identify if you are a NZ Citizen or Permanent NZ resident.
- Make a note if you have your driver's licence and your own transport (if relevant).

- Photos are optional. If you do include some make sure they show you in a professional and positive light. Be selective – do not include too many. If children are in them they need to be non-identifiable.

## Education & qualifications

- Include any relevant professional development you have had.
- As a beginning teacher include your Academic Transcript with your job applications. Your 'unofficial' academic transcript may be sufficient in the first instance. See page 7 of this Guide for details on how you can order your 'official' and 'unofficial' transcript.

## Teaching placements

- Starting with your most recent position, include the year levels, names of associates and schools, centres or services you have taught at. Also include a brief summary of what you 'achieved' on each placement
- Highlight positions of responsibility you held, any extracurricular participation and professional development attended.
- Where appropriate, include comments from your professional practice records to support your achievements in the classroom.

### Curriculum areas & strengths

- Give examples of your knowledge, experience and strengths in different curriculum areas.
- Make sure your classroom management and organisation skills are addressed.
- List any other relevant strengths / skills and how they will benefit your teaching in the positions you are applying for. Highlight attributes such as being responsible, honest, resilient, able to embrace diversity and use your initiative.

### Teaching philosophy (optional)

- Your teaching philosophy needs to summarise what you believe about teaching and learning, based on your understanding of various theories, models, approaches and classroom experience. It needs to reflect your planned practices and be congruent with your values and beliefs.
- The length and presentation of your teaching philosophy may vary as to what different employers look for, but keep it relevant to the application and concise. You can use your creative flair, ideas, quotes etc in illustrating your teaching philosophy. Talk to associate teachers about how they have presented their teaching philosophy in their CV, as a way of generating ideas.

### Additional work experience

- State specific transferable skills and attributes you have gained in other work experience that are relevant to the teaching jobs you are applying for.

### Achievements & interests

- Make sure you include any sporting, cultural, community, academic and leadership achievements.
- Highlight your interests and any transferable skills and personal attributes you have gained that you would bring to the teaching profession.

### Referees

- Make sure you ask your referees for their permission and that they will be supportive of your application.
- Your final teaching placement associate teacher reports – as well as speaking with your most recent associate teachers – will be of particular interest to a prospective employer as they will provide evidence of your classroom practice. Be aware your referees may have to fill in a confidential referee report and submit it directly to your prospective employer.

- Make sure you include your referees' work and mobile numbers (with their permission). This way they can be contacted during the evening, on the weekends or school holidays if required.
- A character and/or work referee are also helpful to include. Additional written references supporting your application can be enclosed, but consider their relevance to the position you are applying for.

### Professional knowledge / professional practice / professional values & relationships

- In summary, your CV needs to reflect the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand Code and Standards and how you have achieved these. See: <https://teachingcouncil.nz/professional-practice/our-code-our-standards/>



# List of action verbs

## Achievement Skills

accomplished  
achieved  
awarded  
commended  
established  
expanded  
implemented  
improved  
increased  
initiated  
overcame  
procured  
produced  
received  
secured  
set up  
succeeded

## Clerical or Detail Skills

approved  
arranged  
catalogued  
checked  
classified  
collated  
collected  
compiled  
corrected  
detailed  
dispatched  
distributed  
documented  
enforced  
executed  
expanded  
filed  
generated  
implemented  
inspected  
located  
managed  
monitored  
operated  
ordered  
organised  
placed  
prepared  
processed  
purchased  
reconciled  
recorded  
reduced  
reported  
retrieved  
revamped  
screened  
sorted  
specialised  
specified  
streamlined  
systematised

tabulated  
transcribed  
typed  
updated  
utilised  
validated

## Communication Skills

addressed  
advertised  
answered  
arbitrated  
arranged  
authored  
communicated  
composed  
conducted  
contacted  
corresponded  
developed  
directed  
discussed  
disseminated  
drafted  
edited  
encouraged  
explained  
expressed  
formulated  
influenced  
interpreted  
lectured  
mediated  
moderated  
motivated  
narrated  
negotiated  
persuaded  
presented  
promoted  
proposed  
published  
recommended  
recruited  
reported  
solicited  
spoke  
supplied  
translated  
transmitted  
wrote

## Thinking & Cognitive Skills

adapted  
applied  
balanced  
conceived  
conceptualised  
created  
derived  
developed  
discriminated

generated  
improvised  
integrated  
memorised  
perceived  
recognised  
researched  
synthesised  
theorised  
updated  
visualised

## Creative Skills

acted  
composed  
conceived  
conceptualised  
conducted  
created  
danced  
designed  
developed

devised  
directed  
drafted  
drew  
edited  
entertained  
established  
expressed  
fashioned  
filmed  
founded  
illustrated  
imagined  
initiated  
instituted  
integrated  
introduced  
invented  
learnt  
mapped  
mastered  
modelled  
operated  
originated  
performed  
photographed  
planned  
presented  
published  
revitalised  
sang  
styled  
taped  
wrote

## Financial Skills

administered  
allocated  
analysed  
appraised  
audited

balanced  
calculated  
computed  
costed  
developed  
doubled  
estimated  
evaluated  
forecast  
managed  
marketed  
planned  
prepared  
priced  
programmed  
projected  
purchased  
reduced  
researched  
reviewed  
revised

## Helping Skills

advised  
appointed  
assessed  
assisted  
cared  
clarified  
coached  
contributed  
conveyed  
counselled  
demonstrated  
diagnosed  
educated  
empathised  
engaged  
escorted  
expedited  
facilitated  
familiarised  
guided  
liaised  
listened  
mediated  
motivated  
nursed  
participated  
provided  
raised  
referred  
rehabilitated  
related  
represented  
resolved  
restored  
served  
serviced  
sympathised  
trained  
understood  
utilised

## Leadership Skills

arbitrated  
chaired  
confronted  
directed  
guided  
initiated  
inspired  
led  
managed  
mediated  
motivated  
negotiated  
organised  
recruited

## Learning Skills

acquired  
appreciated  
attained  
assessed  
combined  
commenced  
committed  
discovered  
estimated  
evaluated  
expanded  
experienced  
exposed  
familiarised  
gained  
graduated  
grasped  
learnt  
observed  
obtained  
perceived  
progressed  
recognised  
scanned  
sized

## Management Skills

administered  
analysed  
appointed  
approved  
assigned  
attained  
authorised  
built  
chaired  
commissioned  
consolidated  
contracted  
controlled  
coordinated  
dealt  
delegated  
designated  
designed  
developed

directed  
employed  
enforced  
evaluated  
executed  
fired  
hired  
improved  
increased  
initiated  
issued  
maintained  
managed  
ordered  
organised  
oversaw  
planned  
prioritised  
produced  
programmed  
projected  
recommended  
reviewed  
scheduled  
selected  
strengthened  
supervised

## People Skills

appointed  
assessed  
assigned  
built  
conducted  
counselled  
employed  
engaged  
enlisted  
formed  
graded  
guided  
liaised  
managed  
mediated  
motivated  
negotiated  
provided  
recruited  
related  
selected  
screened  
stimulated

## Problem-solving Skills

advised  
applied  
arranged  
changed  
converted  
determined  
eliminated  
furnished  
grasped

handled  
identified  
implemented  
initiated  
modified  
proposed  
pursued  
rectified  
refrained  
repaired  
replaced  
resolved  
restored  
reviewed  
revised  
saved  
streamlined  
studied  
subcontracted  
submitted  
supplied

## Research Skills

analysed  
assessed  
clarified  
classified  
collated  
collected  
compiled  
critiqued  
diagnosed  
dissected  
enquired  
evaluated  
examined  
extracted  
hypothesised  
identified  
inspected  
interpreted  
interviewed  
investigated  
learned  
observed  
organised  
prepared  
recognised  
re-evaluated  
researched  
resourced  
reviewed  
revised  
studied  
summarised  
surveyed  
systematised

## Teaching Skills

adapted  
administered  
advised  
briefed

clarified  
coached  
communicated  
coordinated  
counselled  
designed  
developed  
empowered  
enabled  
encouraged  
evaluated  
explained  
facilitated  
guided  
helped  
informed  
initiated  
instructed  
lectured  
listened  
organised  
persuaded  
planned  
prepared  
set goals  
stimulated  
taught  
trained  
tutored  
utilised

## Technical Skills

applied  
assembled  
built  
calculated  
coded  
computed  
constructed  
designed  
devised  
engineered  
fabricated  
installed  
machined  
made  
maintained  
manufactured  
modified  
operated  
overhauled  
programmed  
rebuilt  
remodelled  
repaired  
replaced  
solved  
tested  
trained  
upgraded  
wired

# Developing your LinkedIn Profile

## Profile photo

- Most phone cameras are adequate. You don't need to hire a photographer.
- Make sure you can be easily recognised – your usual hairstyle, glasses, etc.
- Dress appropriately for your desired profession (from the collar upwards).
- Get someone else to take the photo. Stand several metres away.
- Stand against a neutral background – avoid distracting clutter in the image.
- Find a spot with good, diffuse lighting – no shadows.
- Relax, look at the camera, smile.
- Take several photos from different angles, then choose the best.
- Crop to head & shoulders only. You can zoom and adjust the photo after uploading.



## Background photo – optional, not available from mobile.

Choose an image that portrays your industry, location or personality.

- Or find a generic background image such as an abstract pattern or scene.
- Make sure you have copyright permission to use the image – DON'T take one from someone else's web page! Unsplash.com has free photos. Canva.com can help with your own design.
- For best results, crop to a rectangular shape before uploading. You can adjust the position after uploading.
- There are many simple photo editors available. E.g. pixlr.com, befunky.com.

## Headline

Only the first 80 characters show in search result lists but, you can have a maximum of 120 characters.

- Summarise your field, industry focus, expertise, special skills. You can also include what you are seeking.
- Use key words that employers will search for. Look for the trending words used in job ads for your industry and the key words used by professionals in your field.
- Try using a special character (e.g. / | \* +) to separate concepts in your headline. e.g. Job role or Degree qualification | Subject focus | Special Skills | Significant achievement | Future... (the role you want)

Examples:

Law student (final year) / Litigation, International law, Conflict resolution / LawSoc president

Master of Engineering student | Construction Management | Matlab, VBA, AutoCAD

Aspiring Product Designer studying Engineering + Creative thinker + SOLIDWORKS & AutoCAD

Business & Communications Student \* Social Media Savvy \* Seeking Marketing Internship

## Summary

Two to three short paragraphs is sufficient but you can have a maximum of 2000 characters.

- Write in first person "I" – as though you're introducing yourself to your reader.
- Describe your: qualifications, experience, skills and achievements; career goals; interests and personal values.
- Inject some personality – be enthusiastic. Say why you are interested in what you do.
- Include lots of key words - use synonyms for some of your key skills that are listed elsewhere.



# LinkedIn summary examples

I'm in my second professional year of study towards a Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Canterbury. My ultimate goal is to help design products that break barriers and exceed existing expectations but right now, I'm seeking an internship anywhere in NZ for summer 2018-2019, to gain experience in mechanical engineering design or production.

I'm passionate about engineering and design, especially in applications that achieve improved performance for the end-user. I'm helping a friend to build a model jet boat and we're using design tools to try and reduce the drag at high speeds. I gained experience in product design and simulation through course projects and am enjoying using SOLIDWORKS and MATLAB.

Through the University of Canterbury Motorsport (UCM) club, I competed with a team in Formula SAE and Shell Eco Marathon competitions. These events provided valuable experience in problem solving and working as a team with a tight timeframe to achieve client-defined criteria.

When not using technology, I'm usually into sport. I used to play competitive hockey and now coach a junior team every week. I also play on a social soccer team and I'm in the UC squash tournament series.

**Contact me** via: Email: silone@gmail.com, Tel: 027 634 1052, or connect with me on LinkedIn.

*[Note: This structure works for most students, highlighting your goals, skills, education, experience and interests. Providing contact details makes it easy for employers or recruiters to contact you without having to connect first but be conscious of your privacy options.]*

**What I do:** I provide IT service management including desktop support, Help Desk support, network configuration and support, hardware and software support. I can work on contract or full time to help your organisation run a more effective IT department.

**How I do it:** I've worked in IT for 5 years and I go the extra mile to make every project work. I listen and communicate closely with clients and team members and I share technical information in plain English for non-technical people.

**Why it matters:** Our world runs on IT support, so having systems that work well, data and networks that are secure, and continuous uptime, are the underpinnings of every successful business. Close communication and rapid response are vital components of this success.

**Contact me:** thomas.peng@teksavvy.com.

I want to make a positive impact on people's lives by applying engineering concepts to health care technologies. I am completing my PhD in Engineering (Mechatronics) at the University of Canterbury, where I'm working in a research team to develop a reusable, smart insulin pen to improve accuracy and delivery of self-dosage. Other team projects I've contributed to include a sensor to improve the monitoring of breathing for patients in intensive care and a neonatal baby monitor.

I'm a keen social basketball player and I regularly volunteer as a St John First Aider at community sports events.

**Key skills:** Biomechanics, Computer modelling, Simulation, Research, Problem solving, Teamwork.

Alternative spellings: Modeling, Healthcare.

**For details of my research and publications** see [www.researchgate.net/profile/Christina\\_Pahl2](http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Christina_Pahl2)

*[Note: A "key skills" list can include extra key words. Linking out to ResearchGate is OK if you just want to keep those details in one place.]*

I am currently doing an MBA with a focus on project management. I want to use my planning, organisational and leadership skills to help businesses achieve their goals on time and within budget, while providing a low stress, positive experience for all involved. I hope to work with an organisation that values ethical and sustainable business practices and invests in diversity and a positive work culture. I'm interested in people of all backgrounds and have multilingual skills that could be an asset to a multinational or globally oriented organisation.

I've had 4 years' project related experience, including introducing new accounting software into a dual-branch organisation, helping to implement a corporate restructuring programme, and leading a non-profit fundraising campaign. Two years ago I project managed a many-faceted "Recycle & Reno" activity at my university campus, which involved a stocktake of unwanted office products, establishing a collection and distribution system, a city-wide sale event, and a "Re-purpose" competition. This was hugely successful so I helped to set up a student club to ensure continuity of the activity.

Since moving from Brazil to study at UC, I've enjoyed making new friends and fitting into Kiwi culture. I'm an active member of UC's Eco Club Network and the UC Film Club. I've also enjoyed tree planting with the UC Student Volunteer Army and helping to make a positive difference to the Canterbury environment.

I'm available to start work when my MBA finishes in November and I hope to build a permanent career within the business sector here in NZ.

**Contact me:** j.blanco4@gmail.com.

# Application forms

Many employers require applicants to complete application forms, either printed or on-line via their website. Some ask for the sort of information usually required in a CV; however, you should not write, 'see CV attached', rather complete these forms in full, answering all questions.

Other application forms can be much more complex and include questions that require you to describe situations you have been in, how you handled those situations and what the outcomes were. Your response to these types of questions demonstrates your knowledge, skills, abilities and personal qualities to a prospective employer, including your self-awareness skills.

For example:

- What is your proudest achievement and what skills have you gained from it?
- Describe a leadership experience you have had, and what you learned from it.
- Describe two of your qualities that you consider important or special and why.
- What are your goals for the next three years?

Use the STAR principle (see page 19) to answer these questions. Think carefully and write a draft before submitting the form. Write using active verbs (see page 28 for a list of action verbs), I/me sentences and positive language. Don't skip questions. Fill out the form completely and answer the questions thoroughly. Incomplete or missing information could be a reason for screening you out. Gathering all necessary information and preparing documents can be very time consuming. Some sites won't allow re-entry into your application, so ensure you finish it in one sitting and allow yourself up to two hours.

Job applications can be electronically scored, where letters are automatically generated and successful applicants are invited to attend an assessment centre. For more information and practice tests aimed at graduates read the assessment centre information on pages 36–38 and visit [www.shldirect.com](http://www.shldirect.com).

Whether making a written or on-line application, make sure you follow the instructions and include the keywords from the selection criteria provided. Always keep a copy of each application form you complete to refer to if you gain an



interview, and also in case you are faced with similar questions on another company's form. When a detailed form is provided, it may not be necessary to provide a cover letter.

## Useful hints and tips for completing online applications:

- Start the process early – this takes time!
- Ensure you have affordable and reliable access to the internet. It may be preferable to use the access provided at the university. If you leave it too late the competition for access to the site may cause the system to crash.
- Review the organisation's website, vacancy description, and application form to get an overview of what they require.
- Research the organisation: What skills are they seeking? Do you meet the selection criteria? What type of person is an ideal 'fit'? What has been happening in the organisation?
- Tailor every application to the needs of each organisation.
- Print out the application form to use as a draft. Complete responses off-line and cut and paste. Edit as you would for a paper application.
- Give full answers with plenty of detail, using examples from your academic, personal or work experience.
- When describing activities, include dates, the number of people involved, the frequency and your work and personal gains.
- Ask someone else to read your responses and to give you feedback from an employer's point of view.
- Use the spell checker or proof read thoroughly.
- Try to find out how the organisation will search and select applications. Will they use keyword searches or a backend tool that scores responses (e.g. distinction results will score higher than passes and 3 years of part-time work will score higher than 1 year)?
- Use professional business language in any telephone and email contact with the organisation.
- Ensure your email address, voice mail messages, and social media profiles and interactions reflect the professional image you want to convey.
- Save regularly when you are completing the application. If you experience technical difficulties with the website, don't hesitate to contact the organisation. Also advise UC Careers of any issues encountered if your application is made through their services.
- Save a copy of each application you submit and make a note of any contact you have made with the organisation in relation to your application.
- Normally you will receive an email acknowledging your application. Save the record of acknowledgement just in case there is a problem. If you haven't received an email and you would like to know that they have received your application, feel free to contact the company and talk to them directly.

# Job interviews

An interview is a conversation with a purpose, for both the employer and the applicant. The employer can learn about the applicant as a person – their personality, social skills, general abilities and potential. The applicant can learn more about the organisation, the position, career prospects, work environment and the people within the organisation.

## Typical interview structure

Most interviews follow a similar structure, but differences can exist. Make sure you research the format, content and process of the interview you have been invited to. Find out about the type of interview, the timing and location.

Ask if there is any particular preparation you can do. Find out if there is a panel interviewing you and what their names and position titles are. In a panel interview there may be three or more interviewers. Usually one takes the chair and introduces the others, each of whom takes turns at asking questions. One member may simply act as an observer. In answering questions, look firstly at the person who is asking the question, make eye contact with other members of the panel and then finish by looking at the person who asked you the question originally.

The typical interview structure shown here is a guideline only:

- Introductions, handshakes and invitation to take a seat.
- Opening small talk.
- You are encouraged to talk about yourself – for example, ‘Tell me about yourself’.
- Questions are asked to build links between the organisation and you. Some examples include, ‘Why do you want to work for us?’ ‘What do you have to offer us?’ ‘What are your career goals?’
- Behavioural interview questions are asked. (See: Types of interviews).
- The interviewer describes conditions of work, such as hours of work, leave, and training.
- You are asked if you have any questions. Prepare between 3–5 questions.
- Interviewer closes, thanks you, and an exchange of mutual appreciation and goodbyes take place.



## Types of interviews

### Behavioural interviews

This style of interview is used by most medium and large businesses today. The interviewer is looking for previous behavioural events that illustrate a particular competency or skill set. This is based on the premise that past behaviour is the best predictor of future performance. Questions will typically be prefaced by ‘give me an example of’ or ‘tell me about a time’. These events may then be probed further by: How? Why? What?

### Behavioural interview preparation

- Analyse the position description and brainstorm behaviours associated with each skill or competency.
- Identify examples (situations and experiences) that best demonstrate these skills and traits. Examples can come from your academic study, interests, work and life experience.
- Apply the **STAR** model to help structure your answers:
  - **S/T**: Situation or Task: describe the situation or the task you were set.
  - **A**: Action or Activities: describe the actions you took or the activities you performed.
  - **R**: Results: describe the result of your actions – What happened? What was the outcome?
- Practice communicating examples of these previous situations and events to show how you approached these situations, why you used that particular method or action, and what the outcome or achievement was.

### Case interviews

Case interviews are frequently used by consultancy firms and focus on understanding and exploring one or more situation(s) that may be typical in a consulting environment. You may

be on your own or in a group case interview. The case interview is a test to evaluate your analytical ability, problem solving skills, team skills, creativity, curiosity, common sense and ability to articulate your ideas and solutions in a constructive way. Therefore the interviewer will be assessing the knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes you have used to arrive at a solution, rather than looking for the ‘correct’ answer.

### Case interview preparation

- Think about the business problems or situations you might encounter if working for the company. Refer to the position description, company website and literature – what will they be expecting you to do when working there?
- Develop a framework in which to evaluate problems, for example, review the situation, research and discuss options if part of a group case interview, consider alternative possibilities, eliminate unworkable solutions and prioritise outcomes.
- Read business journals and focus on articles discussing current issues facing companies in that industry/sector.
- Practice working through cases. Examples can be found on consulting companies websites, such as The Boston Consulting Group website <https://careers.bcg.com/case-prep>
- Refer to the ‘Case Interviewing’ handout available at UC Careers for further information.

## Telephone interviews

The telephone interview is as important as a face-to-face interview, as it is your first formal interview contact with the organisation. A telephone interview can be used to ‘screen’ a candidate for a face-to-face interview or can replace a face-to-face interview if the organisation is located outside of Christchurch or New Zealand. You may have one or more interviewers on the telephone.



## Telephone interview preparation

- Prepare the same as you would for a face-to-face interview.
- Ensure the telephone number you give is correct.
- If the telephone connection is a bad one, ask the interviewer to call you back in an attempt to secure a better quality line.
- Make sure that on the scheduled day and time of your interview you are in a private room i.e. one that is free from noise, distractions and interruptions.
- If you use a cordless telephone ensure that the battery is fully charged.
- If you want to have notes in front of you during the interview, make sure they're easily visible. Rustling through papers while the employer is listening does not give a good impression.
- Visualise the interviewer asking the questions and respond as if they were in front of you i.e. smile and make gestures. Finding an object to focus on, such as a picture on the wall, may assist you in this.
- Keep your head up to project your voice better.
- Vary the tone of your voice and ensure you have clear pronunciation and are matching the voice pace of the interviewer.

## Practice! Practice! Practice!

Like any other skill, the more you practice, the better you get. A mock interview can be useful, particularly with someone experienced in the interview process. Ask a friend, relative or UC Careers to help you.

- Dress for the telephone interview as you would for the face-to-face interview to help you get into an appropriate frame of mind for the interview.
- Consider standing up. This helps you stay alert and can impact the energy you project to the employer.
- Do not feel obliged to speak if there is a silent patch during the telephone interview as the interviewer is likely to be processing your answer and taking notes.
- Finally... take a deep breath and relax... let yourself be the best you can be on the day.

## Video interviews

### Recorded video interviews

An employer provides a link to their recorded video software, which will require the use of a computer, camera and internet connection. To help familiarise you with the recorded

video interview, a practice question is typically provided. Time will be allocated to read each question and record your responses. Recorded video interviews are completed at your own convenience, however employers will inform you of the date the interview needs to have been completed. Some recorded video interviews may include written responses, and other assessments such as gamification and psychometric tests (see page 38).

### Recorded video interview preparation

- Approach a recorded video interview the same way as a face-to-face interview. Make eye contact with the camera, use positive facial expressions and communicate as if you were speaking to a person.
- Practice using our Interview simulator, see resources and tools at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

### Video conference interviews

A video conference interview involves you and the interviewer being in different places each with a video camera and a microphone connected via a network. You will sit facing a camera and computer or television screen on which you will be able to see the interviewer(s). They will be similarly facing a camera and a computer/television screen on which they can see you.





### Video conference interview preparation

- The structure and questions will be the same as a standard face-to-face interview.
- It is possible that there may be a slight delay on the video conference, which may be unsettling at first but usually is un-noticeable after a few minutes.
- If you are having trouble hearing or seeing the interviewer clearly, tell them immediately.

### Presentation

Whether you are applying for summer work, an internship, final year or graduate position it is important to dress appropriately for the job interview. For more information on personal grooming and the standard of dress required, read the handout 'What should I wear to a job interview?'. Visit 'Resources and tools' at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

### General interview tips

#### Before the interview

- Re-read the job advertisement and position description. Identify what you think are the key skills, qualifications, experience and personal attributes they will be looking for. Prepare examples that showcase how you have demonstrated these.
- Re-read your application – interviewers often use information from CVs as a starting point for interview questions.
- Research the organisation (see page 12).
- Read the list of common questions in this guide, other books and websites. Think about possible answers. Don't memorise an answer

word for word (this will sound rehearsed) – think about the main points you want to get across.

- Reflect upon your strong points and the particular messages you want to portray in the interview.
- Consider and prepare what questions you have about the job and the organisation. What do you want to know that you haven't been able to find out in your research? You may like to find out more about the job, team, organisation and industry.
- If you have any special requirements, ring and speak to the person organising the interview. State your requirement and why you need it, for example, if you have a mobility-related impairment, ask for a car park near to the entrance.

#### At the interview

- Be punctual.
- Be well groomed and neatly dressed in appropriate attire for the profession you have chosen. Don't worry if the interviewer is dressed more casually than you are.
- Nerves are natural! Just try to relax and answer as confidently as possible.
- Smile.
- Speak clearly and look directly at the interviewer while speaking.
- Ask to have a question repeated if you do not hear or understand it. It is better to do this than attempt to answer the wrong question.
- Emphasise your strengths. Try to turn any negatives into positives.

- Before the interview ends, make sure you know how the selection will proceed. That is, when is the next step or when can you expect to know whether you've got the job.
- Thank the interviewer for his/her time.

#### After the interview

Review the questions that were asked and your answers. Were there any questions that you found difficult or wish you had answered differently? Were there any unexpected questions? What would you do differently next time to improve?

Follow up and thank the interviewer/s for their time and the opportunity to attend the interview via an appropriate method of communication, this may take place via email or telephone. Reiterate your interest in the position and company and refer to parts of the interview which explored your strengths, fit and interest in the role and company. The follow up thank you message is an opportunity to address anything about the interview you felt could have gone better. If there was a question you would have liked to have answered better, you can briefly explore the information you would have liked to have shared with the interviewer/s.

You may be asked to return for a second interview, so make notes which might be useful. For example, note questions you did not answer well – they may be asked again – and note questions you expected to be asked but weren't. Also, write down any useful information you gained about the position.

Consider: Was your introduction professional? Was your body language positive? Did you make eye contact, smile and present well? Were your answers comprehensive? Were your questions relevant and concise? Did you do enough research and preparation?

After the selection decision has been made, ring or email the employer/interviewer for specific feedback to help you improve for future applications.

### Common questions

No two people will interview in the same way. However, the following may be of some help to you regarding questions and answers.

- Questions asked at the beginning of an interview are usually intended to encourage you to talk and to help you relax.
- Questions asked by skilled and well-prepared interviewers will always have a purpose regardless of how irrelevant to the position they may seem.

- Think about relevant examples to show you have the specific qualities and skills required for the position. Interviewers are seeking evidence of such qualities as your motivation, attitudes, initiative and self-insight.
- Answers you give must be your own, and in your own language and style. Don't memorise answers from books or the internet - think up your own.
- Employers may ask topical questions – read/watch the news and think about what might be of interest to the employer.

There are no model answers and it would be a mistake to try to formulate exact answers ahead of time. It is okay to ask for a moment or two to think before answering a question.

Here are some guidelines on answers to certain questions. Look at them critically and decide which would be the right way for **you** to answer them.

#### 1. 'Tell us about yourself!'

You could touch on your schooling, university study, work experience, interests, any special experiences (e.g. American Field Scholarship), achievements, skills and/or strengths.

#### 2. 'Why did you choose to major in \_\_\_\_\_?'

Avoid the impression of aimlessness or uncertainty. Remember: choosing a major out of interest and being willing to talk about this is a valid response. Show evidence of interest, logical thought, planning, research and a positive attitude to study. You could share your aspirations here.

#### 3. 'What do you do in your spare time?'

This is generally asked in an attempt to round out a picture of you as a person. Emphasise how actively you pursue spare time interests.

#### 4. 'Describe a situation where you have worked in a team?'

Quote examples of past participation and contribution in teams from work, university, sports, choirs, committees etc. Concentrate on **your contribution** in relation to what the team did, and use the STAR principle (see page 32).

#### 5. 'What appeals to you about this job?'

Think carefully before answering this question. Typically your answer may include how the position is relevant to your interests, previous studies and skills, and how these factors will assist you to positively contribute. Discuss how the position will enable you to further develop your skills and why this is important to you - are you interested in continual learning and development?

#### 6. 'How do you handle pressure?'

Give examples of pressure situations you have been in and ways in which you have positively handled them. The employer is seeking to ascertain whether you have developed strategies for coping under pressure.

#### 7. 'What are your major strengths and weaknesses?'

Listing too many weaknesses will type you as very negative; however, denying any weaknesses will make you appear naive, arrogant or dishonest! The employer is seeking to ascertain your maturity and awareness of yourself. Remember weaknesses can be turned into positives or strengths. For example, your need to understand the 'big picture' before making a decision shows that you don't rush into things.

#### 8. 'What are your career goals, say in the next 3-5 years?'

Outline the goals you wish to achieve to give evidence that you are the sort of person who plans ahead, and has thought about your career and how you wish to develop.

#### 9. 'Why should we appoint you?'

Answer in terms of qualifications, skills, personal qualities, experience and interests that you possess which are relevant to the position.

#### 10. 'How much do you know about the organisation?'

Your answer will reveal how much homework you have done before the interview. Read any recruitment material, brochures or annual reports. Use your initiative to find out as much as you can about the organisation and cite ways in which you have gone about

finding this information. Check their website and for press articles from the recent past. Talk to other people working in the industry, including lecturers.

#### 11. 'What about your disability?'

Job seekers with a disability, which is evident or has been disclosed, may be asked questions similar to these. Practice answering them so you will be ready to discuss them with confidence and to your advantage.

- How do you think your impairment / medical condition will impact on your work? In what ways did your impairment / medical condition impact during your university study?
- How have you managed to overcome the barriers and difficulties you face?
- How will you be able to do the job if you have \_\_\_\_\_?

For more information see page 39 of this booklet, UC Careers Resource Area or visit [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/start-a-new-job/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/start-a-new-job/)

#### 12. 'Do you have any questions?'

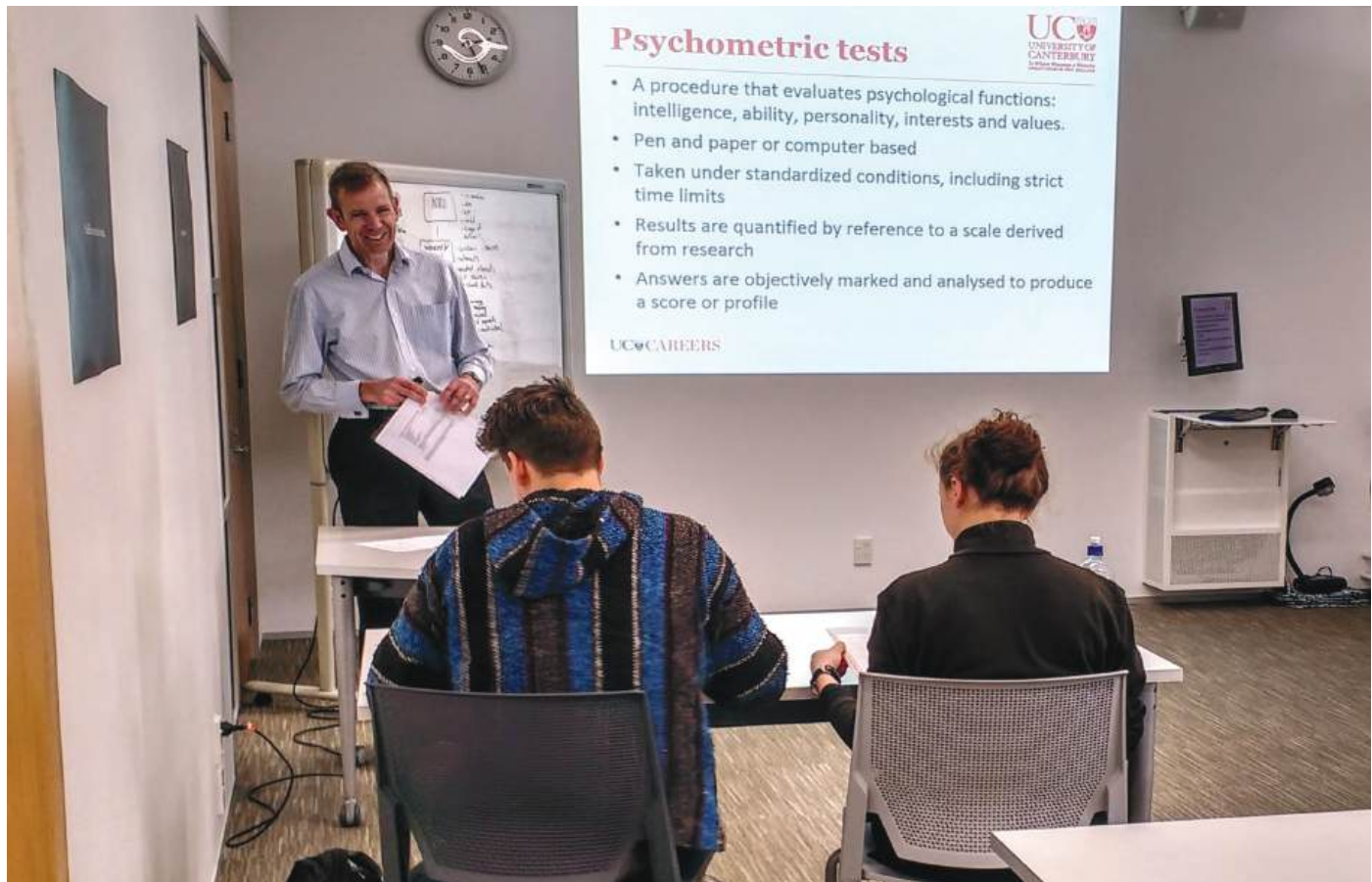
At some point in the interview you may be given the opportunity to ask questions. You should use this opportunity to clarify any points that you are unclear about in relation to the position you are applying for. In the following list you will find some examples of types of questions often asked by interviewees. Be careful to choose questions relevant for you.

- What on-going training could I expect?
- What is the organisation's attitude to further study?
- Where would a new graduate expect to be in five years?
- What performance appraisal system do you have?
- Is it possible to transfer (either within divisions, to other cities or to other countries)?
- What would a typical day/week be like for a new staff member?

### Further information

UC Careers have a range of books available to borrow from their resource area. For online tools visit resources and tools at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)

# Assessment centres & psychometric tests



Some employers have an assessment centre or second interview stage. This is usually held at the employer's premises and can take from a couple of hours to one or two days. Assessment centres may involve group exercises, ability and personality tests, discussions, presentations and a second interview.

It is an achievement to get invited to this stage and it means that you have a good chance of a job – if you prepare properly. To prepare yourself as best as you can, read the information below and attend a UC Careers seminar on Assessment Centres and Psychometric Testing.

Always assume you are being assessed from the moment you enter the organisation until the moment you walk out again. Informal lunches and evening functions may not be formally

marked, but the assessors will be weighing you up. Be careful with your alcohol consumption. You can use informal events, tours or talks to find out about the organisation and whether you develop rapport with team members and want to work there.

## What are they?

Assessment centres and psychometric tests are selection tools for recruitment, promotion or further training, and consist of a series of exercises and activities that correspond best with the type of work you will be employed to do. This means that they differ according to the employer and the job, depending on the key selection criteria and competencies to be assessed. Studies show that 70% of large organisations and 40% of smaller ones are using assessment centres for graduate recruitment.

Candidates generally join a group of six to eight people and are evaluated by a group of trained assessors to ensure objectivity and reliability. Depending on the number of exercises and tests, assessment centres and psychometric tests can take from a few hours to a couple of days. Your

invitation should give you basic information on venue, programme and timeframes.

## Purpose

'If you want to see where someone's strengths and limitations lie, put them into typical situations and watch them.' Saville and Holdsworth Ltd.

Employers use assessment centres to gain an accurate profile of candidates' abilities, knowledge, personality and motivation, in order to select the person most suited to the requirements of the position, or to identify areas for staff development and training.

Tests can help you to find out more about your own strengths and weaknesses through a fair and comprehensive assessment in a competitive situation. It enables you to select a career path for which you are suited.

'There is good evidence that tests, which are professionally used and evaluated, can provide objective, reliable and relevant information concerning the likelihood of job success.' Saville and Holdsworth Ltd, 1997, Practice Leaflet.

## Any of the following activities may be included:

- Group exercises / Case studies
- Presentations
- Role plays
- In-trays
- Fact finding exercises
- Interviews
- Psychometric Tests:
  - Aptitude tests, ability tests or selection tests
  - Personality tests or questionnaires

## Group exercises

The aim here is to see how you work with and react to others; how quick you are able to sum up people, situations and evidence.

A group of perhaps six or eight candidates may be given a general topic to discuss, such as 'Should lead be used in petrol?' or 'Is there a case for censorship?' It may be leaderless or candidates may be asked to take turns as chair.

Alternatively you may each be given a case study, a practical problem to work on: perhaps a batch of company papers to study, relating to an industrial problem, or you might be given a business game in which to participate, or a hypothetical situation to deal with. For example, you are survivors of an aircraft crash in a desert, which of the items of equipment available are most important to survival? You will probably have time to study the problem before being asked to discuss it.

### Tips:

- Get involved and contribute as much as you can in the group.
- The quality of your contribution is more important than the quantity.
- Be assertive rather than passive or aggressive.
- Think outside the square.
- Help the group to achieve the goal, to get the task done.
- Be organised and complete the task on time.

## Presentations

Presentation skills are important in professional and managerial roles, as well as in commercial, scientific and research positions.

The topic of the presentation could be given to you in advance or not. When part of an assessment centre, often you are required to give a presentation on the findings of the case study or the group exercise that you have worked on earlier in the day. Your skills, knowledge and personality are all measured in this exercise.

### Tips:

- Organise a good structure for your presentation.
- Know the information and communicate this clearly, using visual aids if available.
- Stay calm.
- Show them your personality.
- Keep to the time limit.
- Summarise at the end & thank the audience.

## In-tray exercise

An In-tray exercise is designed to test your ability to absorb a large volume of complex information quickly, to prioritise tasks and to make decisions. In this business simulation exercise you will be given a set of instructions, a large amount of information and a time limit. The information is likely to include: letters, emails, memo's, minutes of meetings, reports and phone messages with a variety of importance, complexity and urgency. They provide details of tasks/issues you have to deal with and you have a limited time to make decisions and devise solutions. Be prepared for last minute changes.

Keep in mind that there could be several ways of handling in-tray material. Often there are two parts to this exercise: the actual exercise and the follow up discussion, where you explain the reasoning behind your chosen approach.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview

This interview is often more thorough and probing than the first one you had with the organisation. It is usually a panel interview with one or more senior managers and a Human Resources professional. The questions that you will be asked are more searching questions, driven by the selection criteria, outcomes of the assessment centre so far and 'problem areas' identified in your first interview. It is also to check team 'fit'.

The main recommendation is: Prepare!

## Psychometric tests

Psychometric tests are standardised tests, designed to evaluate psychological functions:

- intelligence
- ability
- personality
- interests and
- values

They are pen and paper or computer based and are taken under standardised conditions, including strict time limits. The results are quantified by reference to a scale derived from research and your answers are objectively marked and analysed to produce a score or profile. Employers use these tests, often in conjunction with other tests or interviews, as they are seen as objective, scientific and fair. Psychometric tests also help employers streamline their recruitment process and allow them to sift out unsuitable candidates at an early stage in the selection process.

The two main types of psychometric tests used in recruitment are:

- Ability, Aptitude or Intelligence Tests
- Personality Tests or Questionnaires

## Ability tests

Ability tests measure maximum performance in:

- verbal reasoning (spelling, grammar and sentence completion)
- numerical reasoning (ability to reason with numbers and analyse data and graphics)
- abstract reasoning
- technical reasoning
- spatial reasoning etc.

Answers are right or wrong and questions start off easy and get harder. There is a strict time limit to these tests, so it is important that you work quickly and accurately.

The frequently used tests are verbal reasoning and numerical reasoning. For many jobs, abilities with words and numbers are the major aptitudes an applicant must possess. Some specialised jobs may demand specialist knowledge and abilities and such dimensions as mechanical ability or spatial relationships may be tested.

The numerical tests usually involve solving mathematical problems, some of which will be easy and others will be much harder. You may have to find missing numbers in a sequence or continue on with a sequence of numbers using the same logic as demonstrated by the numbers that are given.

The verbal tests are aimed at assessing your ability with, and understanding of, language and your ability to understand and reason with written information. You may be given tasks that ask you to relate or categorise abstract concepts. The more difficult items are usually at the end.

#### Tips:

- Practice!
- You are given one or two examples first. Read the instructions carefully.
- Keep an eye on the time.
- Ensure you record your answers in the correct way.
- Don't spend too long on any one question. Move on to the next. The more questions you answer, the better your chances of getting a higher score.
- Check with the test administrator whether the test is negatively scored for wrong answers. If not take a best guess if you are unsure of the answer. A blank line is a scoring opportunity missed. However some tests do apply a 'guessing correction'.
- Free time at the end anyway? Use this to check your answers.

## Personality tests

These are questionnaires that measure your preferred way of behaving and typical performance related to your personality, motivation, values, attitudes and interests. The aim is to identify personality fit with the job and company. Answers to the questions are not right or wrong and there is usually no time limit. The answers are used to provide your Personality Profile.

Sometimes these tests present you with a statement with which you either agree or disagree. Usually these have five points along a scale with a neutral or 'don't know' response in the middle. Sometimes you are given a multiple-choice format. The more sophisticated versions however, have a lie scale built into the scoring formula and if you manipulate your answer to what you think is 'best', you could get caught

out by the score on the lie scale. Frequently the people doing the assessment have an 'ideal person profile' which they match to the results of your test. The amount of your variation from the ideal is what they're looking at.

#### Tips:

- Know yourself and the job.
- Be honest and positive about yourself.
- Place your answers in the appropriate context.
- Trust first impressions.

## How to prepare for assessment centres and psychometric tests

### Before

- Adopt a positive mental attitude.
- Take another look at the Position Description and the company information.
- Be familiar with the skills/competencies for the role, so you can portray these to the assessors.
- Practice.
- Brush up on your basic mathematical skills – make sure you can work out fractions and percentages without a calculator.
- If you have a disability, make sure you inform the organisation in advance so they can make necessary or alternative arrangements.
- Bring glasses or hearing aid if you wear them.
- Be as relaxed and well rested as you can.
- Arrive on time (10–15 minutes before start time.)

### During

- Relax and get into a positive frame of mind. View the exercises and tests as a challenge and an opportunity to demonstrate your skills.
- Be yourself.
- Read or listen to the instructions carefully. Ask for clarification if unclear.
- Don't give up if you haven't done well in the first 1 or 2 exercises.
- It's the criteria you have to beat, not the other candidates.
- Give 100% – Enjoy it.

### After

- Expect feedback, on the day or later.
- Self-review: Make notes on what you did well and what you could have done better. What have you learned about yourself, the job and the organisation?
- Offered a job? Congratulations! You'll need to decide whether to accept or reject the offer.
- Rejected and it comes as a surprise? Ask for specific feedback if you haven't received any.

## For more information on psychometric tests

- Attend a UC Careers seminar on Assessment Centres and Psychometric testing.
- UC Careers have a range of books available to borrow from their resource area.

There are practice aptitude questions and tips for performance available on the following websites:

- UC Careers resources and tools: [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers)
- Assessment Day: [www.assessmentday.co.uk/](http://www.assessmentday.co.uk/)
- SHL: [www.shldirect.com/en/practice-tests/](http://www.shldirect.com/en/practice-tests/)
- Practice Aptitude Tests: [www.practiceaptitudetests.com](http://www.practiceaptitudetests.com)
- Team Technology: [www.teamtechnology.co.uk](http://www.teamtechnology.co.uk)
- The Keirseley Temperament Sorter-11- personality test: <https://keirseley.com/>
- Institute of Psychometric Coaching: [www.psychometricinstitute.com.au](http://www.psychometricinstitute.com.au)
- Revelian: <http://www.revelian.com/>
- The British Psychological society: [www.psychtesting.org.uk](http://www.psychtesting.org.uk)
- Profiling for Success: [www.profilingforsuccess.com/freepsychometrictesting.php](http://www.profilingforsuccess.com/freepsychometrictesting.php)

# Job seekers with a disability or health condition

## The issue of disclosure

### Whether to disclose

Employers can (and often do) ask a question like this: 'Do you have a disability or health condition that might affect how you do the job you are applying for? If yes, what accommodation, if any, would you need in order to perform the tasks involved in this job?'

If your answer is yes to that type of question, please read the section on how to disclose and when to disclose.

If your answer is no to that type of question, you do not need to disclose your disability or health condition to the employer. You are only required to disclose disability and health issues that are relevant to the job.

If in doubt as to whether to disclose, consider these questions:

- Do you fully understand the job requirements? If yes, will your disability or health condition prevent you carrying out any aspect of the tasks or duties listed?
- Do you have a disability or health condition that may reoccur and impact on your ability to do the job in the future?
- Will you need some type of accommodation either at the job interview or if offered the job?
- Will the workplace need to make some alterations or supports?
- Is your disability or medical condition likely to put others at risk in the workplace or make your employer liable?

If you answer yes to any of these questions, you must declare this information to your potential future employer. Please read the section on how to disclose and when to disclose.

If you are still uncertain whether to disclose, discuss this issue with your general practitioner (GP)/doctor, or a member of the UC Careers team.

### How to disclose

In disclosing your disability or health condition, be positive, constructive and specific in how you disclose this information. Identify where potential difficulties may arise in relation to tasks/duties in the position description and then offer solutions to the employer. Be clear about what you can do to prevent and/or manage those potential difficulties and what support you would need from the employer.

If you are asked the above question verbally and/or in writing ('Do you have a disability or medical condition that might affect how you do the job you are applying for? If yes, what accommodation, if any, would you need in order to perform the tasks involved in this job?'), you could respond using this framework:

#### Opening:

- *'I have applied for this position as I believe I have the skills, knowledge and experience to do the job.'*

#### Message:

- *'I need to let you know that I experience... (name disability or health condition)'* Be brief.
- *'In my past employment (or while studying at university) I have managed this disability/health condition by... and/or...'*
- *'How I would manage this disability or health condition in relation to this job and/or (name specific tasks/duties that might be impacted on) is...'*
- *'What I would need from you as my employer is ... (Mention this only if required).'*
- *'If you were to employ me, as you may already be aware, you can access...'* (If you are aware of any additional support that an employer might have access to when hiring you, you could mention that. E.g. a financial subsidy or a workplace assessment, etc.)

#### Closing:

- *'While I do experience (name the disability or health condition) I still believe I have the skills, experience and knowledge you are looking for.'*
- *'I am very willing to undertake a health assessment and/or get a letter of support from my GP/doctor in support of my application if required.'*
- *'I am also happy for you to discuss my disability or health condition with my referees.'*

If you are unsure what to say in disclosing this information to a potential employer, discuss this with a member of the UC Careers team and/or your GP/doctor.

In disclosing, remember that as a university graduate you have proven your ability to cope with demanding and intense work and study situations. Therefore, be enthusiastic, confident and honest in describing your skills, abilities and the experience that you have to offer. Think of how living with a disability or health condition might serve as an asset in the workplace.

### When to disclose

If you are required to disclose your disability or health condition in a job application form, you must disclose relevant information at that point. Read the Whether to Disclose and How to Disclose sections above to ensure you disclose the information in an honest, positive and constructive way.

If you are not asked the question in an application form prior to applying for the position, but for example, you might need some accommodations in attending the job interview, you will need to declare your disability or health condition prior to attending.

If this information is not asked of you at the job interview, be proactive in disclosing your disability or health condition if there is an appropriate moment. Briefly disclosing this information at a relevant point in the job interview will give you more of an opportunity to present your situation in a positive and relevant context. You can also deal with potential misconceptions, provide factual information and suggest strategies to accommodate any obstacle to the job.

If you do not get asked to disclose your disability or health condition in an application form or at a job interview, you can wait until the point at which you have been offered the job and discuss it then if appropriate.

### Conclusion

- You can also visit the UC Careers website for further information and links: [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/start-a-new-job/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/start-a-new-job/)

### Acknowledgements

- [www.hrc.co.nz](http://www.hrc.co.nz)
- [www.eeotrust.org.nz](http://www.eeotrust.org.nz)

# Salary negotiation and employment agreements

Below are some tips you may want to consider to help you negotiate a salary offer with an employer.

## Do your Research

Complete research prior to attending an interview. A good place to begin is to research what the average starting salary is for similar jobs for someone with similar level of qualifications and experience to you. It is also helpful to consider the cost of living in the city and/or country you will be working in, the business climate, who the hiring manager is, the financial status of the organisation, and applicant factors (your skills, knowledge and experience). All these factors can influence salary levels offered.

## Sources of salary Information: New Zealand

Common sources of salary information include:

- The latest UC Graduate Destinations Survey: [www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/graduate-destination-survey/](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/get-career-ready/graduate-destination-survey/)
- MBIE Occupational Outlook: <https://occupationoutlook.mbie.govt.nz/>
- Recruitment agencies, e.g. Hays Recruitment Specialists' most recent salary survey: [www.hays.net.nz/salary-guide/index.htm](http://www.hays.net.nz/salary-guide/index.htm)

- Careers NZ ([www.careers.govt.nz](http://www.careers.govt.nz)) who have information on salary/wage levels and employment trends in their 'Jobs database' section.
- Trade Me's salary guide section: [www.trademe.co.nz/jobs/salary-guide](http://www.trademe.co.nz/jobs/salary-guide)
- Professional associations and unions representing your particular sector.
- Employers, who will give salary information at the appropriate stage of the recruitment process.

## Know yourself

Alongside your research into salary information, consider the position from a broader perspective. Your salary level is likely to be one factor in your level of job satisfaction. Think about:

- Will this job offer me good experience as a graduate?
- Is this position in my field of interest?
- Will I gain valuable skills, knowledge and experience that will help me progress and enhance my career options?
- Does this job reflect my values and what I need and want from work?

## Additional benefits

Consider what additional perks and benefits an employer can offer you alongside your salary, as these could be worth as much as +25% of your salary. An employment package may include one

and/or several of these benefits (or other benefits not listed):

- Vehicle use and/or subsidised parking
- Support for study costs or study leave
- Flexi-time
- Healthcare
- Gym access/exercise programmes or gym membership subsidy
- Bonus provisions, such as above-average sick leave
- Other onsite services e.g. childcare/dry cleaning
- Clothing allowance
- Performance bonus and/or company shares
- Superannuation

## Be realistic

The job interview process is a two-way assessment for both you and the employer to determine your value and fit to the organisation. The employer is interested in what you can do for them, as you are interested in what that job can do for you. While gaining a degree offers you a broad range of knowledge and skills to an employer, you may have had minimal experience in the field of work you are going into. Therefore if setting a minimum salary level you are willing to accept, be realistic.







## Salary negotiation with an employer

Unless you absolutely have to, try not to bring up salary at a job interview for two reasons. Once a job offer has been made you are in a stronger position to negotiate your overall salary level and employment conditions. Secondly, clarifying the employers' expectations of you first will help you be very clear as to what you have to deliver on in the work environment and will help you contextualise the offer they may make you. Therefore if asked the question "What do you want to be paid for this position?" politely explain to the employer that until you have been offered the job you believe it is premature to discuss your salary expectations. If you choose to respond to this question, you can state that your salary level is negotiable and you expect to earn market value given your education/experience.

## Employment agreements

Employment agreements outline the terms and conditions of employment and must be in writing. Before signing an agreement, the employer will provide you time, typically a couple of days to consider and review the contract. It is important to thoroughly read and ensure you understand the content and discuss any areas of concern with an expert who is knowledgeable with employment contracts.

Additionally when reviewing your employment agreement it is helpful to consider the whole employment package being offered to evaluate and ensure a fair offer is being made. Being able to identify what is important to you as part of your employment is helpful to be able to negotiate any terms and conditions of the contract. To be able to negotiate aspects of your agreement a case needs to be built and communicated professionally to assist an employer in understanding the grounds for your request.

As part of your overall employment agreement negotiation, now is the time to negotiate your salary if necessary. If you are unsure about the salary figure you have been offered ask questions such as:

- What is the salary range for this position?
- How did you determine the salary figure you are offering me within that range?

If you then choose to state a different figure to the one they have offered, make sure you have the evidence to back up why you think you are worth that amount. Make sure you have reflected on your unique attributes, marketable assets, strengths, skills, and experience you have to offer.

Providing evidence of your accomplishments and having conducted research on current market salary levels in your industry area/sector will place you in a stronger position where in

a professional and courteous manner you can negotiate for the best possible outcome for you and your employer. Aim to ensure it is a 'win-win' situation for you and your employer. Keep perspective on what is fair and realistic. Be flexible, open minded and willing to compromise.

Finally, with employment agreement negotiation, ensure you have a written copy, take time to consider the offer, and do not hesitate to clarify any questions you have on your employment contract directly with the employer.

If you have any questions or concerns about your employment agreement, these organisations may be able to assist:

- Employment New Zealand:  
[www.employment.govt.nz/starting-employment/employment-agreements/](http://www.employment.govt.nz/starting-employment/employment-agreements/)
- Community Law Canterbury, who offer free legal advice, including on employment agreements:  
[www.canlaw.org.nz](http://www.canlaw.org.nz)
- The union or professional body associated with your industry/profession

# Notes



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