

# Writing a CV and covering letter for a part-time job

## Introduction

Finding part-time work whilst at university is important for most students to help pay for expenses you will occur during your time here. Nottingham is a vibrant city with successful businesses which recruit students on a part-time and temporary basis. Nottingham has a large student population so competition for posts can be fierce.

Typical student vacancies tend to be:

- in certain industries or job areas for example within hospitality, retail, manufacturing. Job roles include bar worker, catering assistant, factory worker, shop assistant, exam invigilator and waiting-on staff
- temporary for a fixed period of time
- part-time – 15 hours or less
- evening or weekend work
- require little previous experience, and
- require minimal training.

## Sources of vacancies

Read our leaflet **Do you need to earn some money?** which describes sources of advertised vacancies, how to approach companies directly rather than waiting for a vacancy to be advertised and help for international students. The leaflet is available through our website at [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/students/resources/leaflets/](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/students/resources/leaflets/) or pick up a copy from our resource area.

## Applying for jobs – what is the employer looking for?

When employers advertise jobs, they will usually provide details about the type of person they are looking for in terms of personal skills and qualities and in some instances, previous experience. For example, in an advert for a sales assistant, the employer may state that they want someone who is a good communicator, who can work in a team and is friendly and polite.

## Applying for job – how to make an effective application

You need to demonstrate to the employer through your CV that you have the skills, personal qualities and experience that they have specified in the job advert or person specification. You need to give examples of when you have used the skills or evidence of experience.

For example, you may have been on a committee of a student society and during meetings you have had to communicate effectively with other committee members. You may have had some work experience in a restaurant and you were able to work in a team with the other staff to ensure that the customers received an excellent service.

Tailor your CV to the job you are applying for at the time. You should not use the same CV to apply for jobs that require different experience, skills and qualities. The requirements for a sales assistant job will be very different from the requirements of a factory worker.

Although the employer will be interested that you are a student and you can use examples from your course to demonstrate certain skills, you do not need to provide information about the modules you are studying unless they are directly relevant to the job you are applying for.

#### Some points to remember when developing a CV

- Use an email address that you check regularly. Ensure you do not use an email address which is unprofessional – appealing to your friends but not an employer.
- One page is acceptable for a CV for a part-time job. If your CV is over two sides, ensure the information is relevant to the job you are applying for.
- Check your spelling and grammar and then ask a friend to check it again for you.
- Keep headings and font size consistent.
- Keep the text lined up or in columns.
- Don't use long paragraphs of text.

#### **Reviewing your CV and covering letter**

If you would like a member of staff to review your CV, you can book an appointment by ringing or calling into the Centre after 10am on the day that you want the appointment. Our phone number is 0115 951 3680 or internally 13680. It would be helpful if you could bring any details of the job you are applying for when you arrive for the appointment. Appointments are available between 10.30am and 4pm on weekdays during term time. Please contact us for details of appointments available during vacation time.

## Example CV – without work experience

# Susie Mai

12 Huntley Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG4 6PQ

Tel: 0111 123456 Mobile: 07999 00001223

Email: [susan.mai@hotmail.com](mailto:susan.mai@hotmail.com)

Nationality: Chinese Status: Student

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**Reliable and numerically minded, bi-lingual student looking for part-time work to fund studies and enhance existing skills.**

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## EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

2007 – 2010 The University of Nottingham

First year undergraduate studying BSc Economics

2002-2007 School of Nanjing, Chinese equivalent to 3 A levels

## SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Communication skills

- I have developed good interpersonal skills through interacting with other students and tutors from different cultures during my degree course i.e. discussion groups and group presentations.

Team working skills

- I am able to work both on my own during my academic assignments and through undertaking group work with my peers and being a member of the netball team.

Time management skills

- I have managed to effectively plan and co-ordinate my time at University to ensure that I complete all my academic studies on time whilst being able to pursue my interests in sport and travel.

## ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS

Sport: Member of the netball team, University of Nottingham.

Travel: I have visited several countries in Europe and enjoy meeting people from different cultures.

## ADDITIONAL SKILLS

- Computer literate with competent knowledge of Microsoft Office, Internet and email.
- Fluent in Mandarin and English.

## REFERENCES

- Mr Peter Jake, Personal Tutor, School of Economics, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham, NG2 5RD Tel: 0115 123455 Email: [personaltut@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:personaltut@nottingham.ac.uk)

- Mrs Jane Doe, Economics Tutor, School of Economics, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham, NG2 5RD Tel: 0115 123444 Email: [jdoe@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:jdoe@nottingham.ac.uk)

**Example – with work experience**

**Cameron Farndon**  
**75 Baker Avenue**  
**Lenton**  
**Nottingham NG3 4PP**  
**Email: cameronf@gmail.com**  
**Tel: 01222 999991/ Mob: 07777 999991**

## **EDUCATION**

**University of Nottingham** 2004-2008  
BEng Electronic and Communication Engineering

### **Greater Manchester School, Manchester**

A levels – Maths, Physics and Geography 2002- 2004  
GCSEs - English, Maths, Double Science, Geography, History, CDT, French,  
Drama and Business Studies 1997-2002

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

### **Publicity Officer: Students' Union, Engineering Student Society**

05/2006- 06/2007

- Contributed to monthly committee meetings. This has developed my communication skills on a one to one and group basis.
- Organised the publicity for the Society's charity ball. This involved working in a team with other members to agree our marketing strategy, producing flyers and posters and discussing our requirements with the printers. Able to work to a time schedule agreed with the committee.

### **Customer Services Assistant: Asda, Manchester Piccadilly branch**

08/2003-08/2004

- Worked in a very busy branch and maintained excellent consumer relations.
- Operated tills and handled financial transactions - cash, debit and credit cards.
- Used initiative to find solutions to customer problems in a calm manner.
- Developed good communication skills and learnt how to deal tactfully with members of the public

## **VOLUNTARY WORK**

### **Homelessness worker: The Hostel, Nottingham**

11/2006 – 09/2007

- Prepared food and served over 30 people using the hostel.
- Befriended clients to offer help and support.

## **INTERESTS**

Enjoy keeping fit and play in a five a-side football league in Lenton. This involves one training session and one match night a week.

## **INTERESTS**

- Computer Literate: Regular PC and Internet user and literate in Windows XP, Word and Excel.
- Driving: Holder of a full, clean driving licence.

## **REFERENCES**

1. Mr A Mann, Store Manager ASDA, Piccadilly, Manchester MC2 5RD Tel: 0161 888 9999
2. Miss A Bird, Chair, Students' Union Engineering Student Society, University of Nottingham, Portland Building, University Park, Nottingham NG7 2RD Tel: 0115 951 4766 [a.bird@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:a.bird@nottingham.ac.uk)

## Example covering letter

75 Baker Street  
Lenton  
Nottingham  
NG3 4PP  
4<sup>th</sup> December 2007

Mr T Parkin  
HR Manager  
TC Retail Ltd  
1 Lower Street  
Nottingham NG1 5NP

Dear Mr Parkin

Ref: SA123 Part-time Shop Assistant – City Centre

I am writing to apply for the above position which I saw advertised in the Nottingham Evening Post on Wednesday 2nd December 2007. I have enclosed a copy of my CV and would be grateful if you would consider my application.

I am currently studying engineering at the University of Nottingham and am looking for part-time work to fit in with my studies. I am extremely interested in this position as I enjoy working with people and have previous experience of working in a customer service role. I am highly numerate, computer literate and am able to learn and adapt quickly to new tasks.

I am aware that you are one of the largest retail outlets in Nottingham and I am keen to work for a fashion retailer with an exciting range of clothes for all age groups. I would very much like the opportunity to work with your company and look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours sincerely

Cameron Farndon

Some points to remember when writing a covering letter.

- Your address goes in the top right hand corner.
- The company address goes to the left hand side as above.
- If you have a named contact, use Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms/ and end Yours sincerely.
- If you do not have a named contact, use Dear Sir/Madam and end Yours faithfully.
- Always state where you saw the vacancy i.e. website, newspaper etc.
- Do not repeat everything in your CV, pick out the most relevant points in relation to your experience, skills and qualities.
- Always put a date on the letter.

### **Example short email if a covering letter is attached**

Subject: Application for Shop Assistant

Dear Sir/Madam

I am emailing with reference to the position of shop assistant which was advertised on the Jobcentre Plus website recently. As requested, I have attached a copy of my covering letter and CV for your consideration.

I look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours faithfully

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### **Example 2 – Longer email if no covering letter is attached**

Subject: Application for Shop Assistant

Dear Mrs Browne

I am emailing with reference to the position of shop assistant which was advertised on the Jobcentre Plus website recently. As requested, I have attached a copy of my CV for your consideration.

I am currently a student at the University of Nottingham. This vacancy interests me as I am looking for flexible part-time work around my studies. I am fluent in both written and spoken English and I have previous experience of working in a busy retail environment. I have good communication and interpersonal skills gained both through my course and work experience. I am reliable and hard working and am able to learn things quickly.

I am available immediately for interview and look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours sincerely

Some points to remember when sending an application via email.

- The email message will provide the first impression of you and is usually printed off and attached to your CV/application form.
- Write a longer email if you are not attaching a separate covering letter.
- If you have a named contact, use Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms/ and end Yours sincerely.
- If you do not have a named contact, use Dear Sir/Madam and end Yours faithfully.
- Make sure you write using a professional approach and language.
- Make sure you attach the documents you say you are going to attach.
- Check your spelling and grammar before sending the email.

## Further resources

- Pick up a copy of our leaflet **Writing CVs, letters and application forms – Where do I start?** This leaflet is available in our resource area or you can download it from our website at <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/students/resources/leaflets/>
- Read our leaflet **Writing Skills for applications and CVs** – also available from our resource area or on the above webpage.
- If you want to develop a CV for a graduate level job, please refer to our leaflet **Writing a CV and Covering Letter**, again available from our resource area or the above webpage.
- Refer to some of the books about writing a CV and covering letter available in our Centre. These books are available for overnight loan. Please speak to a member of staff at the information desk.
- During the autumn and spring terms we hold a number of workshops on writing a CV and looking for part-time employment. For more details, visit our webpage <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/students/events/types/index.php> and book a place by signing up online.

## How to Contact Us

### In person

- University Park, Portland Building, Level D West.

Term Time: 10am to 5pm Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and until 7pm on Tuesdays (until the end of May).

Vacation Time: 10am to 12.45pm and 2pm to 5pm Monday to Friday.

- Sutton Bonington, Room A2, Amenities Block

A careers adviser will usually be available on Tuesday afternoons. Please telephone us on 0115 951 3680 to book an appointment.

- Jubilee campus - Please use our service at University Park.

Postgraduate students in the Business School have their own dedicated careers service. Please email the careers advisers at [BusinessPCS@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:BusinessPCS@nottingham.ac.uk) for more details.

### Online

- **Visit our website** at [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers)
- **Email** us on [ccd-enquiries@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:ccd-enquiries@nottingham.ac.uk)

### By phone

- 0115 951 3680 or 13680 within the University.

JT August 2008

If you would like this information in larger print or Braille, please ask at the information desk or phone us on 0115 951 3680. This leaflet is also available on our website at [www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers)