



The University of Edinburgh

Careers Service

Effective Applications

CVs, covering letters & application forms

Graduate Jobs and Internships



expanding horizons

www.ed.ac.uk/careers

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This booklet can be made available in alternative formats. Please contact your Careers Consultant or Careers Service Helpdesk for more information.

When finished with this publication, please return this booklet to: -

**Careers Service
The University of Edinburgh
Third Floor, Main Library Building
George Square
or
Weir Building (KB)**

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Effective Applications – applying for graduate jobs and internships

Graduate jobs

Applying for graduate jobs is a time consuming business. It requires careful thought and preparation, even before you put pen to paper. You may feel that you don't have time to spare and juggling applications with your studies can seem completely overwhelming. Remember though, that dedicating time at this stage to developing important job-hunting skills is a genuine investment in your career and likely to pay dividends in the future.

Internships

There's no doubt that work experience gained in your vacations or as part of your degree can make you more employable. Many internships and placements are highly competitive and this booklet will help you to make effective applications so that you stand out from the crowd. Whether you are applying for a graduate role or an internship your application needs to be of the highest standard.

So take the time to read this booklet before you make applications. You may be one of the lucky few who get the first graduate job or internship you apply for, but making effective applications is a skill you will need throughout your working life.

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Making effective applications

What do employers want?

Employers are interested in you as an individual and what differentiates you from others. Study, work and spare time activities will have developed useful skills and given you the opportunity to demonstrate personal qualities such as tact, enthusiasm or teamwork.

Some positions require particular academic qualifications or technical skills, however all require certain personal qualities.

Employers are interested in 3 main areas:

- Your academic performance
- Your experience of work (paid or unpaid)
- Your activities and interests

Before making applications, take a few minutes to:

STEP 1: Assess what you have done

Jot down some basic information. You will need a record of your education, work experience and other activities. Don't forget to include course projects, time spent abroad, positions of responsibility, voluntary work, sports, music and drama activities and other interests.

Next to each of these, write down 'from' and 'to' dates, and brief details about what you did – job tasks, courses taken, prizes won and so on. Keep this information safe. You will need it for almost every application you make.

STEP 2: Assess what this means

Using the information from STEP 1, write down **significant events** and **achievements**. Divide your experience under headings, such as education, work experience, travel, leisure and voluntary activities. Take each activity and make a note of what **insights** you gained and what **skills** and **qualities** you developed. Focus on exactly what you were involved in and what your unique contribution was. These notes will make it easier to fill in application forms, write your CV and prepare for

interviews by providing **evidence** of your suitability.

	MA Geography		
Education	Fieldwork project Seminars Dissertation	Study of Glaciers in Iceland Presented papers to a group Interpreting Data	Adaptable Persuasive Numerator
	Waitress		
Work Experience	Serving customers Ordering stock Training new staff	Working under pressure Deciding what to buy Running induction sessions	Teamwork Organisation Presentation
	Squash		
Interests/Activities	Competition Club treasurer Social Events	Represented Uni Kept accounts Went to lots of events – communication	Motivation Responsibility Mixing

You will need to highlight different experiences according to the job/person specification, but **always try to present an even spread of evidence from as many areas of your life as possible.**

STEP 3: Research the employer/job

An employer will expect you to have researched their company or organisation and have some understanding of what they are looking for.

- **Read** all the **literature** sent to you by the employer and consult their website.
- **Check the MyCareerHub employer database** on the Careers Service website.
- **Call for more information**, particularly if a named contact is given for ‘informal discussion’ about the opportunity. Think of questions you want to ask before you call.
- **Check other relevant websites** (e.g. professional associations) and read any relevant press.
- **Request more information** from the employer if necessary.

Speculative applications

It has been estimated that one-third of vacancies for graduates are not advertised publicly. In some fields, e.g. public relations, journalism or consultancy work, employers expect applicants to take the initiative and contact the employer directly, rather than waiting for a job to be advertised.

Thorough research is vital to success. A small number of well-targeted applications is more likely to produce results than a mass mailing.

Some employers produce little information. To research these companies and career areas:

- Use the careers folders (green) in the Careers Service Information Centre and the careers website links to find out more about the career itself and skills needed in that job.
- Use Connect.ed to make contact with alumni for tips and advice on getting into specific career areas (www.ed.ac.uk/careers/connected)

STEP 4: Make the Link

Use your research to **match** the skills and qualities required (or that you feel are required if you are writing a speculative application) with the evidence of your suitability for the position. The aim is to produce an application that connects the needs of the employer with your skills and experience.

Here's a view from a recent student...

"It is better to thoroughly research the job position and the company before you get started with the form - they will ask you what you know about them and what you think the job involves. Also, it will give you a good insight into whether or not you could like the job (so many people have accepted jobs to discover it was not for them at all!)."

Do:

- Research the employer and their culture as fully as possible
- Read the job/person specification carefully and match yourself to the employer's requirements
- Keep a copy of applications sent with a note of who you sent it to and when.

Don't

- Make multiple, 'general' applications. These are obvious to employers!

Online Applications

Employers increasingly use online application systems, which save them time, money and paper. Some organisations offer the choice to apply in writing or online. It is usually a good idea to choose the online method as it often allows for faster and more efficient processing.

It's worth knowing that...

- Some companies include mandatory pre-screening, such as online questionnaires or tests, before allowing you to access their application form.
- Some systems do not allow you to revise your answers. It's usually a good idea to draft your responses, spell check them, and paste them into the form once you are satisfied with them.
- Some companies use automated selection software, looking for key words in your application. You can make an educated guess at these 'buzz' words by carefully reading their recruitment literature.
- Some forms can be inflexible. They may not allow for Scottish qualifications (you may have to enter MA as BA); they may also limit the number of characters of free text you can enter.

Tips for making good online applications:

- Read everything you can about the employer and their vacancies. Selection criteria such as minimum academic/nationality requirements and the skills and aptitudes they are seeking, will help you decide whether to apply.
- Print the form, if possible, and read each question carefully before attempting an answer.
- Don't write too much. Even if some forms don't restrict the amount of space you have, bear in mind that someone has to read it.
- If you are pasting text from other application forms, be extra careful to make all the necessary changes (especially with organisations' names!).
- Print your completed application and keep it for future reference. If you cannot print the whole form, copy and paste into Word for your records.

- Don't click the SEND button until you have read it over from beginning to end and you are satisfied that it is accurate.

Avoiding application frustration:

- Read the application advice on employers' websites. They often tell you how long the form takes to complete, whether you can save as you go along etc.
- Give yourself plenty of time, just in case you encounter technical difficulties.
- Choose somewhere quiet to work on your application. If using the Careers Service PCs, try to avoid busy times, e.g. lunchtime, afternoons, or near closing time.
- If you register to access an application form, record your registration details and keep them secure so that you can access your work easily
- Take occasional breaks. You're more likely to spot any errors when you return to your work feeling refreshed. Remember to save your work though – some online systems will automatically log you out after a period of inactivity.

For further help and advice:

- Ask at the Careers Service for helpful resources and feedback on your draft applications.
- You can practise making online applications and get advice about tackling difficult questions at **www.selectsimulator.com**.

Typical questions and how to approach them

Please tell us about an achievement that you are especially proud of because it was difficult or demanding to do. Explain why it was challenging and what specific contribution you made towards achieving the end goal.

From an application form for a general management training programme.

The employer is looking for an answer that:

- is complete and tackles each part of the question
- gives evidence that you can overcome barriers and implement solutions
- is well written, and interesting to read

For example:

'To raise £500 for a local hospice, I persuaded 4 friends to join me last summer in a sponsored cycle round Cornwall. As well as planning the routes, I arranged publicity and secured business sponsorship. I achieved this by phoning and writing to local companies, approaching business associations and negotiating publicity with the local press and radio station. When severe rain threatened the event, I convinced a local hotel to give us free accommodation and a donation in return for publicity in the local newspaper. The final sum raised was £750.'

They DON'T want to see:

- emphasis given to a group's achievements rather than your contribution ("I" becoming "we")

Please describe a situation where you had to work effectively in a group or team to achieve a shared goal. What was the aim of the team? What was your contribution?

From an application form for a large business advisory firm.

The employer is looking for an answer that:

- fully addresses the question
- states not only **what** has been achieved but also **how**
- highlights your skill in working with others

For example:

'The University's Photographic Club Committee arranges an exhibition of members' work each November. Initially a lack of co-ordination in how the committee set up the venue led to misunderstanding and loss of valuable time. I called a meeting and suggested a systematic plan with each committee member undertaking specific organisational tasks. This equal

division of labour and improvement in communication led to closer co-operation, allowing us to open the exhibition in time.'

They DON'T want to see:

- too much emphasis on the problems faced rather than what you did to overcome them
- derogatory comments about others in your team, which may cast doubts on how effectively you work with others

Please give details of any major project work that you have undertaken at university.

The employer is looking for an answer that:

- gives evidence of relevant skills (e.g. problem-solving, written communication, research, computing, team-working).
- shows that you can communicate in a way that is interesting and understandable.

For example:

My final year project at university involved finding out whether protective cells surrounding a mouse embryo originated from bone marrow (as claimed by some researchers) or from the lining of the uterus.

The experiment involved co-operation with two other students in order to make efficient use of time and pooled laboratory resources, it required a good understanding of statistics and strong analytical skills as well as advanced specialist IT applications.

I am presently writing up a short article on the above work for publication in a scientific journal.

They DON'T want to see:

- lots of irrelevant technical jargon.
- lists of courses and projects that are repeated from your 'Education' section.

Other typical questions and tips for approaching them

Describe any aspect of your course of particular interest to you and/or of relevance to your application.

Consider why you chose your course; what relevant knowledge you gained; whether you have learnt to work in different ways (e.g. independently, in a team); transferable skills you have developed (e.g. analysing information, problem solving, technical skills, IT); whether you have changed as a result of your course (e.g. sharper mental acuity, confidence, broader view). Mention any special opportunities or achieved particular successes (e.g. scholarships or work placements).

Ask at the Careers Service for Options sheets (“Your degree in...what next?”) to help you analyse your course and the skills you may have gained from it, or find them online at www.ed.ac.uk/careers>explore your options>what can you do with your degree.

Which of your work experience was most beneficial to you and why?

Mention skills you developed which are important in the job for which you are applying. These could include practical experience, dealing with the public, taking responsibility, reliability, working with people from varied backgrounds and so on.

What attracts you to a career in....?

Demonstrate that you have thought carefully about the job, what particular aspects of it interest you, what unique contribution you can make given your skills and background and why you think you would be good at it. Try to be specific and **do not** regurgitate the recruitment literature.

Give details of your main extra curricular activities and interests to date. What have you contributed and what have you got out of them?

Consider your range of interests (cultural, creative, current affairs, sports-related, community/voluntary based) and decide which ones are appropriate to your application in terms of what they indicate about you (competitive, self-motivated, a ‘team player’ independent, enterprising)

and what you get out of them (fun/relaxation, fulfilment, new skills/expertise, challenge, companionship). Be specific about your level of interest and involvement in any activities as this can speak volumes about you.

Describe a complex problem you have faced. What steps did you take to solve it? What did you learn from the experience?

Briefly describe the problem then break down the actions you took to solve it into component steps. You will be highlighting your creativity, planning and decision-making skills. Briefly mention what you learned and possibly what you would do differently next time.

Open Questions/Personal Statements

Having asked for your personal details, qualifications and previous employment, some forms confront you with a blank sheet and an open question inviting you to promote yourself. This type of question is often known as a 'Personal Statement'.

The question can be extremely open or you may be given more guidelines. For example:

'Please describe your experience, skills, abilities, achievements and responsibilities which are most relevant to the post. You may use examples from, or make reference to, other areas of involvement as well as paid employment'.

Key points for answering such questions:

- Review your research (see page 5).
 - What is the employer looking for?
 - What are the key skills and qualities needed?
 - What evidence do I have that I possess these key skills and qualities?
- Read the question carefully. Make sure you make careful use of any guidelines given to direct your answer.
- Structure your answer. Break it into short, readable paragraphs and consider using headings for clarity.

Suggested Structure

1. Explain **why** you are interested in applying for this position and employer.
2. Describe the **relevant skills, abilities and qualities** you can contribute.
3. Provide **evidence** to support your claims. For example, relevant work experience, course work or dissertation, positions of responsibility.
4. Conclude with a **summary** of the above, restating your interest in the position and organisation, and emphasising your enthusiasm and commitment.

Using Headings

Headings can be a very effective way of giving a clear structure to your personal statement and making the information easy to read. They must be appropriate to the type of job applied for.

Example Headings - General

Reasons for applying

Briefly outline the background to your application, including the relevance of your work experience and your interest in this particular role, with this particular organisation.

Relevant skills

List the skills you have to offer for this particular job, and, essentially, provide evidence under each heading, of how you have effectively demonstrated this skill.

Example Headings – Job specific

The following headings are relevant to a management consultancy position. Other jobs can be broken into their component parts and treated in a similar way.

- Commitment to a career in consultancy
- Understanding of business and commercial experience
- Knowledge and skills gained from academic studies
- Skills gained from other activities
- Additional achievements and interests

Write a short paragraph with your evidence underneath each heading

Golden Rules for Completing Applications

- Research the organisation and position before applying.
- Read the questions carefully and follow all instructions to the letter.
- Provide evidence of the skills and qualities required - re-read the job advertisement carefully in order to tailor your answers precisely.
- Don't leave unexplained gaps - write "not applicable" rather than leaving spaces.
- Check spelling, punctuation and grammar very carefully.
- Keep a copy of your application.

Where to get further help

You can find more typical questions and approaches to answering open questions in the reference books on applications in the careers information centres. Also consult the applications section of the Careers Service website:

www.ed.ac.uk/careers > *using the Careers Service* > *CVs, applications and interviews*

Writing a CV

Employers often receive large numbers of CVs for an advertised job. However, applicants frequently do not take the time to make sure that their CV will stand out.

A 'general purpose' CV sent out 'en masse' is unlikely to be successful, so you need to target your CV for each job. Along with your covering letter, your CV must present you as an ideal match for the job for which you are applying.

Writing your CV is not as difficult as it might first appear. With a little preparation and thought, and some basic word processing skills, most people can produce a CV that presents them efficiently and effectively.

Here are some guidelines to get you started:

The basics of writing a CV

- Your CV is your first chance to make a good impression - 'you at a glance'. Make sure yours looks professional and has no spelling or grammatical mistakes.
- Your CV usually includes your personal details, education and work experience. It also says something about your skills, interests and activities and gives the names of people who will give you a reference.
- UK CVs are usually a maximum of 2 pages long.
- You usually present your education, work experience and other activities in reverse chronological order – the most recent (and usually the most relevant) first.
- You decide on the best way to present your information. Your CV needs to be relevant, easy to read, and make you stand out from the crowd.

Personal Details

Head up the page with your name and contact details. Include an address, email that you check regularly, and telephone number. A mobile number is fine. If you are between addresses (home and semester time) you can give both, with dates of availability at each.

Personal profile

Some people include a profile that summarises what they have to offer and highlights why they are motivated towards a particular career. If you choose to do this (and it is by no means standard on a UK CV), make sure yours is punchy and relevant, and no more than 3 sentences long. A well written profile should grab the reader's attention and make them want to read more.

Education

Give details of your qualifications, with dates. Courses with the same title can vary greatly between universities, so you should give an informative, interesting and relevant description. Mention your most relevant degree courses, your dissertation and/or any major projects you've completed, and your expected degree classification. This section might also be the best place to mention prizes and scholarships. The Scottish system allows students to graduate after 3 years with an ordinary degree.

If you chose this route, you should mention this, and include your reasons if you think this is relevant.

Employers aren't just interested in what you learnt, but also how you learnt it. Projects, research tasks, team assignments and making formal presentations can all be used to show that you have lots of the skills that employers want. Don't forget to add in any practical skills learnt from lab or field work or time spent abroad.

Work Experience

An upbeat, interesting work experience section will convince the reader that you will fit in and be productive early on. You might feel you don't have much work experience, but holiday and semester jobs will really pay off here.

Work experience doesn't have to be paid - in popular sectors like the media, it is common to work unpaid for periods of time. And for social and community roles, lots of candidates will have done voluntary work. These experiences are just as valuable as your paid work, sometimes more so.

It's up to you how you arrange this section. One way is to separate directly relevant and other work experience. For example, if you are applying for a job in teaching, you could first have a section called 'Teaching Experience' or 'Work with Young People', where you give details of paid and voluntary work with children and young people. You would then follow with a separate heading for 'Additional Work Experience', giving details of your other jobs and voluntary work.

Allocate space according to how relevant your information is - so, you would give more information to your relevant work experience in a school, for example, than to a retail job. Look at your experience as a whole. What layout would fit with what you have to offer?

How far back should I go?

Usually finalists include at least brief information about their school-level qualifications on their CV. After graduation you could reduce the amount of detail, perhaps mentioning these qualifications briefly, but not giving individual results. Read the requirements carefully - some jobs will ask for 'full academic details'. Mature students don't normally need to list all of their school qualifications. If you are at all unsure, check with a Careers Adviser.

Lack of experience?

Don't worry if you don't have much work experience. At this stage, employers won't expect you to have held lots of responsible jobs. They will be impressed, though, if you come across as interesting, motivated and academically able - and demonstrate that you have done your research before applying.

Employers will be interested in what you learnt to do, what you experienced and what you achieved.

Including context	<i>'...a busy international office...'</i>
quantifying	<i>'...assisting 4 solicitors...'</i>
and giving outcomes	<i>'...resulting in faster customer enquiry response times'</i>

can help to make your experience stand out from the crowd
So this CV statement:

'Taught after-school mathematics to sixth formers'

becomes:

'Tutored a group of three sixth formers leading up to Advanced Higher Mathematics exams. Used examination board materials to improve technique through practice sessions. Student exam success resulted in further referrals from satisfied parents.'

Additional Skills

Include a section for these or incorporate them elsewhere on your CV.

- IT skills – what applications can you use? To what level? Can you use applications that are relevant to the job.
- Languages spoken – do you have 'basic', working knowledge' or 'fluent' ability in a language?
- Driving licence – if this is relevant to the job.
- Professional memberships – if you hold student membership of a professional body.
- Other qualifications that you have gained recently, that might help your application, such as a first aid certificate or a food hygiene qualification.

Interests, activities, responsibilities and achievements

This is where your personality can shine through. You can include sports, music, drama, societies and clubs, positions of responsibility, prizes and awards, travel, community projects, courses such as Insight Into Industry, charity involvements and much more. Give just enough detail to interest the employer and make them want to interview you to find out more.

Some CV styles you may have heard of:

Skills-based CVs

Instead of a detailed work experience section, a skills-based CV puts the emphasis on the skills required for the job and gives evidence demonstrating that you have these skills. This can be a good approach if you have lots of experience in one career area, and want to change careers, or if you have had lots of short-term jobs and want to summarise the skills you have learnt. You'll find an example of a skills-based CV at the end of this booklet, with others available in the Careers Service information rooms.

Computer-generated CVs

These packages prompt you with questions about your education, work experience etc. and then produce a CV based on your responses. They can help you to structure your thoughts but won't usually help you to think about the most relevant information or the best way to present it. Be cautious about packages and make sure you have control of the end result, rather than the package dictating to you.

Do:

- write down the key points that you want to include in your CV before you start writing it
- make judicious use of space, bullet points and bold text
- use past tense for past courses and jobs, and present tense for current courses and jobs
- watch out for large unexplained gaps in your CV – employers will notice and might be suspicious if chunks of time are 'missing'

Don't:

- give the same amount of space to each job or course – if your Standard grades take up as much space as your degree, you've probably got the balance wrong
- use patterns, borders or graphics. You might think it looks good, the employer might not agree
- ever lie on your CV – if an employer finds out you could be sacked!

For more advice on writing your CV, take a look at the links on our website www.ed.ac.uk/careers>Quick links>Job applications and interviews.

References

Referees are usually contacted after an interview, and should be able to tell the employer about your suitability for the job. At the application stage, you'll often be asked to include the names of two referees with the following details:

- Job title
- Address
- Telephone number
- Email
- Their relationship to you (previous manager, personal tutor)

Your first referee should be someone who can comment on what you have done in the recent past. Finalists and recent graduates usually name their Director of Studies or a tutor. Ideally, the second referee should be someone who knows you in a work capacity. The alternative is someone who has known you for a long time. Avoid using friends or relatives as referees.

Make sure the people you choose are happy to provide a reference, then keep them up-to-date about your career plans and the applications you have made.

If you are sending lots of CVs, and will find it difficult to keep your referees up-to-date with your applications, you could simply say 'References available on request' rather than giving full details.

Covering letters

The covering letter may be the first point of contact you have with the employer and is therefore of crucial importance. It should link your suitability with the vacancy and must entice the employer to carry on and read your CV. The letter is even more critical if your application is a speculative one.

Content of Covering Letter

The covering letter should be typed (unless otherwise stated) on no more than one page of good quality plain A4 paper, of the same size and style

as your CV. It should be neatly laid out in the style of a business letter. It should:

1. **Set the scene.** State what job you are applying for and where you saw the advertisement. Confirm that the CV is attached.
2. **Explain why you are interested** in the job and/or the organisation - here you could carefully target your letter and say something specific about the organisation.
3. **Explain why** your unique blend of knowledge, personal skills and experience make you a strong candidate. Point out what you have to offer the organisation.
4. **Indicate what you hope to gain** from the job and where it fits into your career plans.
5. **Conclude positively.** Tone is very important. If you are applying speculatively, you may want to add that you will follow up your letter with a telephone call within a specified period of time.

These points should be addressed in the covering letter but it doesn't necessarily need to follow the exact structure laid out above.

Try not to use exactly the same expressions that appear in your CV. If you are replying to an advertised post, look again at the advertisement and the job description and show how closely you meet their requirements.

Speculative Applications

If you are making a speculative application, the letter is even more important. It must state what you want and expect from the organisation as well as describing what you have to offer in terms of skills and experience.

- Address the letter to the most appropriate person in the organisation - you may have to research this, usually by making a telephone call to check the relevant name and job title (beware of misspelling names!).
- Clearly state what job you are interested in.
- Say why you have chosen to apply to that particular company or organisation. Show you know something about them, their products and/or services - you may need to research this carefully.
- Convince the employer that you can do the job for which you are applying. The style and tone of your letter should be persuasive.
- State when you are available for interview or discussion.

Do:

- address it to the most appropriate person
- ensure that your letter supports rather than repeats your CV
- show you have thought carefully about your 'fit' for the job you are applying for
- let the language used reflect your enthusiasm
- ask someone to read over it

Don't:

- address your letter to Sir / Madam if there is a named contact
- send the letter off without having checked it for spelling and grammatical errors
- underestimate the covering letter's potential to make an impact

Example CVs and Covering Letters

The following examples of CVs and covering letters may give you ideas about content and layout. However, please don't slavishly copy any particular CV or letter! Instead, choose a style and layout you feel comfortable with which will allow you to present your information effectively.

If you've learnt anything from reading this booklet, it should be that your application should be **personal** and **specific** to you!

One Page CV: Lauren McKenzie (Page 19-20)

This applicant is applying for a graduate trainee position in a public relations consultancy. Early in her covering letter she outlines what she has to offer the company, providing evidence for her claims. She has managed to produce a one page CV by conveying only the relevant detail (e.g. detail about her degree is confined to the subject and grade and her dissertation). Significantly, she includes her voluntary experience as a student publicity officer in the work experience section, as this is relevant to her application.

CV for a job directly relevant to degree subject: Daisuke Ishihara (Page 21-22)

This CV belongs to a finance and investment student applying for a graduate trainee post with an investment bank. The student highlights specific modules within his Masters and focuses on relevant work experience, also mentioning relevant personal interests. In addition to subject-specific skills, he also mentions transferable 'soft' skills, such as communication and time management.

Skills-based CV: Emma Donaldson (Page 23-25)

This final year student is applying for a job unrelated to her degree subject and work experience. She uses a skills-based CV to tailor her experience to a job in advertising.

In her covering letter she clarifies her interest in advertising and the agency to which she has applied. She shows how she has gained an insight into and understanding of the industry. She introduces her relevant skills and experience and refers the reader to her CV for evidence of her suitability for the post and her close match to the person specification.

Internship with SureSave Bank: James Davies (Page 26-27)

James has clearly done his research. He has thought about what the internship demands and has highlighted his academic studies to match this. His letter reminds the reader that he has already shown his interest in SureSave Bank through telephone and personal contact. James makes the connection between his studies and work experience, and the internship for which he is applying.

65/5 High Street,
Edinburgh,
EH6 5QQ

Ms M. Starkey,
Business Manager,
Star Europe B2B,
High Street,
Churtsey, NW4 6SS

6th May 2011

Dear Ms Starkey,

Re: Graduate Public Relations Trainee Post

I would like to apply for the above post which I saw advertised on MyCareerHub @ the University of Edinburgh's Careers Service.

I am a recent graduate of Edinburgh University with a strong academic and research record. I have highly developed communication and business organisation skills as well as a track record in administration in an international law firm. I would be useful to Star Europe from the outset.

My degree, in particular the final year project I undertook, involved a considerable amount of research using a wide variety of resources as well as initiative in finding and following up contacts. My facility in French and Spanish along with my experience of living and working abroad enable me to function effectively in a European setting. As President of Edinburgh University's String Orchestra I initiated, organised and led an exchange tour with Krakow Academy of Music which was a huge success, with full houses on both sides of the North Sea. This indicates that I have the interpersonal and organisational skills required to be successful in PR work between businesses. My IT skills are another asset; in both education and employment I have used technology extensively. As Publicity Officer for the student comedy club I set up a brand new website and membership increased considerably.

I am very attracted to Star Europe; it is a company with a European focus and one to which I feel I can contribute a great deal. My research on your company suggests that current developments in business to business expansion would offer me the opportunity to utilise and develop my particular combination of practical skills and experience to the benefit of Star Europe.

I hope you will consider my application and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Lauren MacKenzie

Lauren MacKenzie

Address: 65/5 High Street, Edinburgh, EH6 5QQ **Tel:** 0131 221 3131 **Mobile:** 0077 555 444

Education

The University of Edinburgh:

Graduated 09

- **MA Joint Honours in Geography and Social Policy (2:1)**
- Dissertation: 'Sustainability: A Case study of a European Funded Regeneration Project'
- Joint Honours Student Representative on Staff/Student Committee for 2 consecutive years.

Perth Academy:

Aug 99 - May 05

- **Advanced Higher** Geography B
- **Highers**, Geography A, English A, History B, Music B, Biology B

Work Experience

Bilingual Secretary, Linklaters, Paris

Jul 10 - present

Bilingual secretary for two lawyers (one French and one English) in International Finance Securities Law. Involves creating and editing legal documents, file management and dealing with clients. A demanding and challenging position, which requires the ability to work in a team, attention to detail and a high level of administrative skill.

Au Pair, Paris

Nov 09 - Jun 10

Lived and worked with a French family, providing childcare for 3 children aged 6, 9 and 12 and general household help. Assisting the children with their English homework. Attended French language classes during the day.

Publicity Officer for Student Comedy Club

Oct 07 – Jun 09

Set up new website, using Pagemaker, increasing Club's profile and membership. Liaised with student publications and local newspapers to advertise events.

Check-out Assistant, Tesco, Edinburgh

Oct 04 – Sep 08

Checkout assistant in a busy store with an often demanding clientele.

Languages

- **French** Fluent, written and spoken.
- **Spanish** Basic working knowledge, spoken and written.

Computer Skills

- Competent user of Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Adobe Dreamweaver and the Internet.

Positions of Responsibility/Activities

- President of Edinburgh University String Orchestra 2006/2007. Initiated and led exchange tour between Krakow Academy of Music and Edinburgh University.
- Music: Play violin - classical and traditional Scottish music. Member of the "Camerata d'Isle" orchestra in Croissy Sur Seine, France.
- Sport: Cycling, skiing, tennis, swimming and basketball.
- Travel: Toured Germany, Holland, Paris and Poland with school/ university orchestras.

References available on request.

Daisuke Ishihara

email: ishiharad81@yahoo.co.jp mobile: 07123 456 789

Currently working towards a Masters in Finance and Investment to complement a wide-ranging portfolio of work experience and academic achievement. My skill-set includes strong language skills, high levels of numeric capability and confidence with risk management software.

Education

- **MSc. in Finance and Investment** **Sep 2010 – Sep 2011**
University of Edinburgh, UK

Achieved consistently high marks throughout the course demonstrating particular capability in **Portfolio Management** (78%) and **Investment Mathematics** (82%)

Further taught modules include: corporate finance, global financial markets, financial accounting statements, derivatives, and investment analysis.

Dissertation: *The term structure of interest rate*

Working independently has required and further strengthened my skills in self-motivation, research, analytical thinking and written communication.

- **BSc in Applied Mathematics (First Class)** **Apr 2005 – Mar 2009**
University of Fukuoka, Japan

Modules in Geometry, Applied Maths, Group Theory and Statistics developed strong numeric ability, accuracy and problem solving ability.

Relevant Experience

- Fund Manager Assistant (Intern), Daiwa Securities** **Mar 2008 – April 2008**
Tokyo, Japan

Carried out research analysis on potential companies from a range of sectors using financial media and briefings provided by investment analysts. Analysed financial information such as profit and loss and cash flow statements relating to the companies.

Produced written presentations for the fund manager ensuring all recorded information was accurate and up to date. Interviewed brokers and took part in evaluation discussions demonstrating effective communication with colleagues.

This experience strengthened my business acumen, in particular leading to growing market awareness and understanding of influencing factors on fund valuations.

Further Experience

**Retail Assistant, Edinburgh Woollen Mill
Edinburgh**

Oct 2010 – Jun 2011

Part-time position in a popular retail outlet. Provided friendly and professional service as part of a customer-focused approach. Frequently assisting Japanese tourists with translation and information about the city in general.

**Teacher, Ashikita Cram School
Kumamoto, Japan**

April 2009 – Mar 2010

Mathematics Tutor for students aged 6 – 18. Developed strong communication skills through presenting information in a clear and understandable manner. Preparing for lessons and managing class time effectively required organisational and forward-planning capability.

Additional Skills

IT

- Software: SPSS, Eviews, Crystal Ball – advanced level
- Fully conversant with Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, Outlook, PowerPoint and Project

Languages

- Native Japanese
- Fluent English (IELTS 7.0)
- Conversational Chinese

Personal Interests

Active member of Edinburgh University Trading and Investment Club. Participating in buying and selling shares for the EUTIC portfolio, developing skills in the use of different valuation techniques.

Enjoy playing competitive Volleyball. Member of Men's First Team as an Undergraduate. Currently member of Edinburgh University Volleyball Club.

I spent 4 months travelling (April – July 10) through Canada, USA and South America gaining an understanding of different cultures and strengthening my English Language ability.

Personal Information

Telephone: 0131 987 6543

Mobile: 07123 456 789

Address: Flat 3/2, 60 Biggar Street, Edinburgh, EH6 8GF

References available on request

28 June 2011
Graduate Recruitment
Profile Solutions
4 Northampton Square
London
NW1 4TS

Dear Mr Baker

Application for Junior Account Executive Trainee Vacancy

I would like to apply for the above position which was advertised on MyCareerHub in the University of Edinburgh's Careers Service and have enclosed my CV detailing my relevant skills and experience.

I first developed an interest in advertising through responsibility for advertising and marketing events during my voluntary work at the Refugee Support Group. Since then I have researched the profession through the IPA, attended presentations on campus and ultimately organised a placement with RedMedia which confirmed that this was the right career path for me. The role offers me an excellent starting point whilst allowing me to use the skills I have developed over the past four years.

All my work experience has involved excellent communication skills - from working in a busy cafe to a fast paced council department and I would be confident in building client relationships. Similarly I have integrated well into every team I've worked in and this was recognised by my colleagues at the Dome who twice voted me employee of the month. Whilst completing my degree I have combined various part time roles with volunteer work, involvement in student societies, travel and keeping up my own art work. This means I can organise a demanding workload and also be flexible when necessary. I am a creative individual, painting and drawing regularly and am also a creative thinker who enjoys coming up with solutions to problems.

I have been interested by the range of work Profile Solutions undertake - from helping small businesses like TechnicaSecurity to raise their profile to your recent UK wide campaign with Pedigree Pet Foods. The variety is exciting and I would welcome the opportunity to meet the needs of diverse clients. Profile Solutions offer me the chance to take on early responsibility and your mentoring scheme means I would feel supported in doing this.

I look forward to hearing from you and am available for interview at any time.

Yours sincerely

Emma Donaldson

Emma Donaldson

2F3, 2 Dalry Road
Edinburgh EH4 9FF

Telephone: 0775 324 1088

Email: edonaldson@hotmail.com

Profile

Having recently graduated from the University of Edinburgh I am currently looking for a challenging role in advertising. As a creative individual who thrives on working with people in a fast paced environment, I feel I am well suited to the Junior Account Executive role with your agency. I have the relevant skills required for the position, as detailed below.

Skills Profile

Communication

- Confident presenter having given team and individual presentations throughout my degree course
- Dealt tactfully with members of the public whilst working in the council planning department and liaising with council staff to resolve problems

Team Work

- Worked as a member of an effective team of 5 providing a range of services to book festival audiences, managing smooth transition of audiences of up to 250 people at changeover time between events.
- Awarded 'employee of the month' for customer service twice during my time at Dome, nominated by my fellow team members

Organisation

- Good organisational skills were required while co-ordinating food and drink provision by 8 volunteers at a world music event at the Refugee Support Group
- Organised a placement at RedMedia and arranged summer to raise funds in order to undertake this and travel before returning to university

Flexibility

- Flexible staff member providing support to a professional team of planning staff in a busy customer service environment
- Combined studying with being a member of student societies, volunteering and working throughout my degree

Creativity

- Enjoy sketching and watercolour painting for relaxation, also visit galleries and exhibitions whenever possible for inspiration
- Can think creatively to create events such as the world music event at the Refugee Support Group which raised nearly £3000

Additional Skills

IT

- Fully competent in Microsoft office having completed the ECDL. Competent in use of adobe photoshop and dreamweaver

Languages

- Conversational French and basic German

Education

University of Edinburgh
MA (Hons) History 2:1

Sept 07 - June 11

I have developed strong research and analysis skills, along with excellent written communication

Helensburgh Academy

Sept 01 - June 07

Advanced Highers: History, English (A)

Highers: English, History, Maths (A), German, Modern Studies (B)

Work Experience

Administrative Assistant, Planning Department, Midlothian Council **June-Aug 2009**

Varied administrative duties supporting a busy and fast paced team within the city council.

Work Placement in Account Executive Team, RedMedia

Summer 2010

Shadowed and supported the team over a two week period, gained insight into the fast paced advertising environment.

Front of House Staff, Edinburgh International Book Festival

Summer 2010

Supporting the smooth running of large events at a busy festival and providing high level customer service.

Waitress, Dome Cafe

2007-2009

Worked as part of a team to serve customers in an upmarket and busy city centre cafe.

Voluntary Work

Volunteer

Refugee Support Group, Edinburgh

2007-present

Various tasks including organising events, fundraising and providing support to service users

Interests and Responsibilities

Art

•Have had tuition in drawing and watercolours and regularly paint. Visit galleries and museums regularly.

Film

•I am currently a member of the University Film Society and regularly attend meetings to contribute to our choice of films. At school, I established and ran a film club for pupils. I organised two 'mini-festivals' - one for Westerns and one for sci-fi. I provided viewing notes and organised discussions.

Additional studies

•World Cinema: from the Silents to WW2 (part time Open Studies course at Edinburgh University)

Travel

•Spent 3 months backpacking in Eastern Europe (2002)

References available on request

Ms. H. Farrier
Human Resources Manager
SureSave Bank
22B London Road
Edinburgh
EH4 88H

16/3 Gilmore Terrace
Edinburgh
EH99 8BP

Dear Ms Farrier,

Actuarial Internship – Summer 2011

With reference to our recent telephone call and subsequent visit to the actuarial department of SureSave Bank's Edinburgh offices, I am writing to you to apply for the internship opportunity as advertised on the MyCareerHub database at Edinburgh University. Please find a copy of my CV attached for your consideration.

The first three years of my degree have provided me with a broad knowledge of maths and statistics, however it has been my enjoyment of the Probability and Operational Research and Statistics modules in my degree that initially sparked my interest in pursuing a career in actuarial work. My subsequent research using the University's Careers Service, in addition to the recent visit I made to the bank, has further increased this interest and I would relish the opportunity to undertake an internship to provide me with an insight into the actuarial profession.

My work experience at Jenners Department Store has developed my ability to work effectively as part of a busy team, and maintain the high standards that are expected by our customer base. Working in a busy, often pressurised environment has helped me to prioritise my workload effectively whilst appreciating the need for attention to detail. From my recent observations, these skills will undoubtedly be useful in ensuring that an internship with SureSave would be effective, not only for me but also for the bank.

I would value the opportunity to gain this work experience particularly as the bank operates in a global context and is a market leader in the actuarial profession. I would also like to work for a bank that actively supports their staff with professional development at all levels, and provides a comprehensive and challenging internship experience.

Thank you very much for taking the time to consider my application. I am available for interview at any time and would be more than happy to provide further details if required.

Yours sincerely,

James Davies

Term Address
16/3 Gilmore Terrace
EH99 8BP
0131 285 941

James Davies
jimdavies3@hotmail.com
Mobile: 07784 621 593

Home Address
(June - Aug 11)
16 Langlands Place
Perth, PH1 2XN
01698 245 432

Education

University of Edinburgh BSc Mathematics & Statistics 2008 - 2012

Courses include:

- Financial Mathematics, Mathematical Computation and Communication, Algebra, Complex Variable Differential Equations, Pure and Applied Analysis, Probability, Operational Research and Statistics.

Third Year average grade: 71%

Class representative for Maths 1 & Maths 2 **2008 & 2009**

- Acted as liaison between course tutors and peers.
- Influenced submission procedure in Maths 2, resulting in clearer guidelines for students.

Skills developed through degree:

- **strong analytical skills** and the importance of being able to convey results and the methods by which they were obtained.
- the ability to **manage my time effectively** and **meet deadlines**.
- **accuracy** and **attention to detail**.

Awards:

- Thistle Scholarship (Awarded to top Year 1 student at Edinburgh University).

Perth Grammar School 2002 - 2008

Advanced Highers: Chemistry: B 2008

Highers Grade A: English, Mathematics, Economics, Physics, German 2007

Standard Grades: 7 at Grade 1 2006

I.T. Skills

General: Microsoft Excel, Word, PowerPoint and Access. Lotus Notes

Specialist software: User of MAPLE, MINITAB and S-PLUS

Work Experience

Jenners Ltd., Edinburgh Senior Sales Assistant 2008 - present

Since being promoted from sales assistant within this prestigious department store, I have taken on a broad range of responsibilities including shop floor supervision in the men's fashion department, cashhandling, customer service and refunds, stock ordering and administrative duties.

Extra Curricular Activities

President of University of Edinburgh Cycling Club

2009 - present

Having been a member since 2004, I was elected to President in 2009. My role involves overseeing and coordinating the work undertaken by the committee, which during this time saw membership increase by 500%.

References

Available on request

Further Information and Resources

This booklet will get you started in making effective applications for Graduate jobs and Internships. You may also find the other guides in this series useful:

Effective applications - Semester and Vacation Jobs

**Effective applications - Postgraduate Courses and Academic Jobs
(available online only)**

Effective applications lead to interviews, so you will find our guides to **Successful**

Interviews and **Telephone Interviews** extremely useful in helping you prepare beforehand and perform on the day.

Look out for our series of talks on preparing CVs and application forms held throughout the year.

If you would like help with your applications, you can also visit the Careers Service to speak to one of our team.

www.ed.ac.uk/careers

Central Area:

Third Floor
Main Library Building
George Square
Edinburgh EH8 9LJ
Tel: 0131 650 4670
Fax: 0131 650 4479

Email: careers@ed.ac.uk

The King's Buildings:

Weir Building
West Mains Road
Edinburgh EH9 3JY
Tel: 0131 650 5773
Fax: 0131 650 6704

Email: careers@ed.ac.uk