



Hartlepool
Youth Services



CANNY CV

**A complete guide to writing your
first CV and cover letter**

Table of **Contents**

[Introduction](#)

[What is a CV?](#)

[What is included in a CV?](#)

[Writing a personal profile](#)

[Key skills](#)

[Key skills examples](#)

[Key skills - evidence examples](#)

[CV example](#)

[Do's & Don'ts](#)

[How to write a cover letter](#)

[Cover letter example](#)

[Application Forms](#)

[Person specification](#)

[Asking for more information](#)

[Volunteering](#)

[Know your rights](#)

[Advice from employers](#)

[Further info & links](#)



Introduction

Hi there!

Youth Voice Hartlepool is proud to share 'Canny CV'; a guide to help you get part-time work. This comes from Oliver Huermann's promise to fight for fair pay and understand the challenges young people face at work in his election campaign.

After being elected as Member of Youth Parliament for Hartlepool, Oliver conducted a survey to hear from Hartlepool's young people. From your input we found that the biggest issue is getting your first part-time job, with a lot of people unsure of how to start writing a CV or cover letter, and how to find opportunities which do not require experience. This guide aims to address this, to help you find your first job.

'Canny CV' is your go-to guide for writing CV's and Cover Letters. It's packed with tips on what to do and what to avoid, examples, advice from employers, and info about your rights at work. It also gives volunteering ideas, links and further info to support you.

Everyone who helped make this guide possible wishes you the best of luck in finding a part-time job!

What is a **CV?**

- CV Stands for **Curriculum Vitae**.
- It is a document which gives a brief description of your skills, education and work experience.
- It gives a first impression to potential employers.
- Along with a cover letter is typically what you would hand in or email to an employer in order to get a job interview.

What is included in a CV?

Name and contact details

Your name is the title of your CV so should be centred and in bold. Add your telephone number and email address underneath.

Profile/Personal Statement

This is a few sentences that introduces who you are, what some of your skills are and what your goals are.

Key Skills and Achievements

This will likely be the most important part of your CV as if you're just leaving school you may not have much work experience. This is the section for you to sell yourself and the skills that will be of interest to a potential employer.

Education

Where you went to school, what you studied and what grades you attained. If you haven't received your grades, put down your predicted grades.

Work Experience

Any employment or work experience you have; including babysitting and the main duties that you carried out as part of the role. You can include volunteering experience here if it is relevant to the role you are applying for. If not put this under volunteer work.

Volunteer Work

Any volunteer work you have undertaken.

Interests and Hobbies

This is an optional section but can give the opportunity to show your personality. Maybe you are a keen amateur photographer or interested in fashion? If you think it may help you in the role, put it here. Don't make anything up, you may be asked about it in an interview!

References

You don't have to provide references up front. Just say "References available on request".

Writing a personal Profile



A personal profile is a short paragraph that sits at the top of your CV under your name and contact details.

It's a statement about you which quickly tells an employer a bit about yourself and the main skills and qualities that would make you suitable for the role you are applying for.

"I am a confident and hard-working student in Year 11. After my GCSE's I plan to go to Sixth Form to study Performing Arts and am looking for part time work to fit alongside my studies. I am friendly and approachable and enjoy working with the public. I enjoy multi-tasking and would enjoy and be suited to working in a fast paced environment".

"I am a Year 10 student looking forward to my GCSE's next year. I am considered a conscientious and responsible member of my school community and have supported parent's evenings and other school events."

"Hardworking student seeking employment alongside studying. Highly motivated and enthusiastic, I consider myself a natural leader with excellent verbal and written communication skills which have been gained as part of my role in a Youth Council. I am comfortable with public speaking, hard-working and committed".

Key Skills

Key skills are life skills that will help you when you enter the world of work. You may not have had a job before but you will have developed skills in many other ways – volunteering, extra activities at school, being involved in clubs or groups and from lots of other areas of your life.

Key skills include things like...

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Initiative
- Problem-solving
- Computer / IT skills
- Organisation
- Leadership
- Hard work and dedication
- Creativity
- Numeracy
- Reliability

Don't just make a list – anyone can do that. You should give real life examples of how you have gained these skills.

For example, under the heading "Teamwork," you could list bullet points such as "collaborated with other members of my local youth group to develop a community project"

You should give at least 5 key skills with examples.

Try to make sure that your key skills link to the job that you are applying for.



Key Skills Examples



- Communication (verbal and written).
- Teamwork and collaboration.
- Commitment.
- Organisation.
- Resourcefulness.
- Problem-solving.
- Adaptability.
- Critical thinking.
- Time management.
- Creative.
- Punctuality.
- Conflict resolution.
- Leadership.
- Active listening skills.
- Maintains a positive attitude.
- Shows Initiative.
- Proactive.
- Trustworthy.
- Self-motivated.
- Willingness to learn.
- IT/Computer skills.

Key Skills – Evidence Examples

Reliability

- I have been a committed member of my local Youth Voice group for over 2 years.
- I have 98% attendance at school and am always punctual.

Teamwork / Cooperation with others

- As a prefect at my school I have been responsible for assisting with parents evening making sure that everything runs smoothly
- I have worked with other students to create props and backdrops for school productions.

Problem solving

- I have excellent problem solving skills. During my Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award I was part of a group that planned and completed an expedition. I was responsible for navigating an unfamiliar environment and ensuring I had the correct equipment to complete the task.

Communication Skills

- I have helped to research on topics such as active travel with my local youth group and presented these findings to local councillors in meetings.

Organisation

- I have supported local youth events, ensuring all activities and resources were organised and available when needed.

Attention to detail

- I take responsibility for cooking for others at my youth group, ensuring dietary preferences are taken into account and that health and hygiene standards are adhered to. I maintain a clean and tidy working environment.

MELISSA CLAPTON

CURRICULUM VITAE

PROFILE SUMMARY

A committed, creative and confident Year 11 student. I am currently looking for part-time work alongside my studies and am seeking a customer service role in which I can utilise my people skills.

KEY SKILLS

- Motivated and reliable:** I have been a member of Hartlepool Youth Voice for 4 years. Meeting weekly to discuss issues pertinent to young people and to develop projects to address them.
- Food safety knowledge:** High level of food safety awareness from a theoretical and practical perspective due to studying Hospitality and Catering. I also used these skills to develop a recipe book as a community project to encourage healthy eating.
- Excellent verbal and written communication:** I am a confident and clear speaker, I have gained these skills as part of Youth Voice Hartlepool. As part of the group I have spoken about young people's issues at a regional level and with people of all ages and backgrounds.
- Team work:** I enjoy working as part of a team and have worked alongside staff from Hartlepool Youth Service to coordinate and deliver a water safety summer event.
- Problem solving:** I achieved my Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award in which I planned and completed a group residential. I planned out routes, set up sleeping areas and cooked for the team.
- Conscientious:** I have been a prefect at English Martyrs for 2 years.

VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE

English Martyrs Summer School

JULY 2023 - JULY 2023

- Supporting young people with special educational needs to engage in a range of different activities across the Summer Holidays to help them transition to year 7.
- I had the responsibility to support, answering any questions and concerns they may have.

Hartlepool Youth Services

2022 - ONGOING

- I have supported a range of events and projects for young people including Holiday Activity Fund supporting young people on free school meals in activities and food provision.
- Planning and delivering water safety events and booklets.
- Creating a cooking booklet for young people on a budget.

EDUCATION

English Martyrs School and Sixth Form College

2025

- English Literature (Predicated 6)
- Mathematics (Predicated 8)
- Science Combined (Predicated 6)
- Hospitality and Catering (Predicated 7)
- Creative iMedia (Predicated 6) (Level 2 distinction*)

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

I have a keen interest in baking and cookery, I have honed my skills in hospitality and catering and I cook a lot in my own time. I love to read and like to be engaged with current affairs. My passion is art, I am planning to study Fine Art and eventually hope to become a tattoo artist.

REFERENCES

References available on request.

Do's & Don'ts



Do

- Get someone you trust to check over your CV when you have completed it
- Use a size 11 or 12 font
- Use a simple font like Ariel, Calibri, Garamond or Times New Roman
- Use a spelling and grammar check when you have completed your CV
- Be honest about your experience and skills
- Use the same font and format for both your cover letter and CV



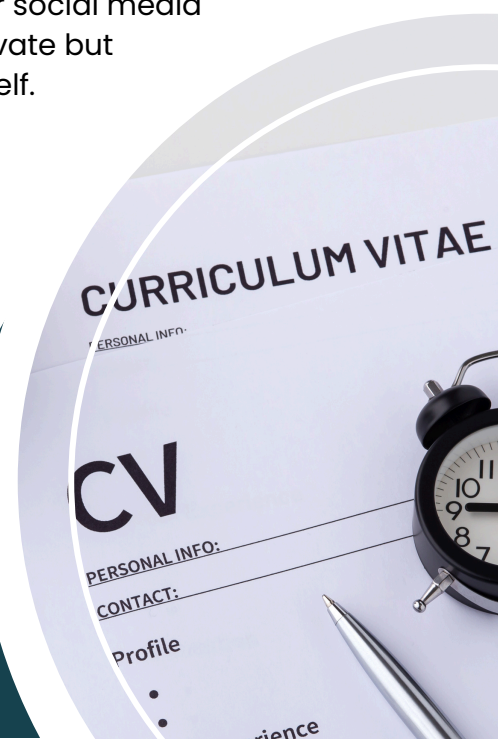
Don't

- Use an unprofessional email (hugeass69@gmail.com will not give the best impression to a prospective employer)
 - Write CV at the top of your CV – they know what it is
 - Make your CV more than 2 sides of A4
 - Use slang words on your CV – be professional
 - Make things up – you may be asked about everything you put on your CV so be prepared. Don't say you can speak French if all you know is "Bonjour!"
-
- **76% of CVs** are ignored if you have an unprofessional email address.
 - **Nearly half** of all CVs that are more than two pages long are discarded.
 - According to the Recruitment and Employability Commission – **50%** of all CVs contain spelling mistakes
 - **92%** of recruiters reject candidates who have made negative comments on social media

There is a possibility that a potential employer could look at your social media profiles before offering you a job. You can set your profiles to private but it's definitely worth considering what you put online about yourself. It's a small world and someone you may have on a friends list could be connected to someone you would like to work for.

- Don't have offensive language and rants on your profiles
- Don't make nasty comments or negative replies to posts
- Don't upload inappropriate photos of yourself or of your mates

What you post online could have a serious impact on your future job prospects.



How to write a **Cover Letter**

A cover letter introduces you to an employer and asks them to think about your application.

It's a short letter, usually 3 to 5 paragraphs long.

When to include a cover letter

You should always include a cover letter when you apply for a job using a CV.

You can write it as an email if you're applying online or print a copy to go with a paper application.

Send it to the right person

It's important to try to address your cover letter to someone by name. Check you have the details of the person you need to send it to.

You'll need their name and preferred title. For example, 'Dr', 'Mr', 'Mrs', 'Ms', and their job title. You should also make sure you have the right company name and address, including postcode.

If you do not know their name

If the job advert does not include a name you can check the company website. Try to find details of the head of the department, head of human resources or a recruitment manager.

If you still cannot find a name, you can start your letter with 'Dear Sir or Madam'.

Introduction

Introduce yourself and explain how you found the advertised job. You can mention the job title, and reference number if there is one.

If you're asking about any job openings and not applying to a vacancy, tell them what sort of job you're looking for. Let the employer see how keen you are to work for them.

How to write a **Cover Letter** (Cont.)

A cover letter introduces you to an employer and asks them to think about your application.

It's a short letter, usually 3 to 5 paragraphs long.

Show you're right for the job

Highlight the skills and experience you have that match what the employer is looking for.

You do not have to mention if you have a disability if you prefer not to. Organisations like [Disability UK](#) can give you more advice.

Ending the cover letter

Thank the employer for considering your application. Let them know that they can get more details from your CV, and tell them you're looking forward to hearing from them.

Let them know how they can best contact you. Make sure your contact details are correct on both your cover letter and CV.

Yours sincerely or yours faithfully

If you know the name of the person you're writing to, you should end the letter with 'Yours sincerely'.

If you've addressed the letter 'Dear Sir or Madam', you should end the letter with 'Yours faithfully'.

COVER LETTER

Example

Mrs Clementine (Owner)
Clementine's Café
Orange Avenue
Seed Town
OR8 NGE

(Please note: You don't need to put the employer's address but if you have it to hand it can't hurt!)

Dear Mrs Clemintine,

Job: Café Assistant

My name is Melissa Clapton and I am a committed, hardworking person with a keen interest in baking and cooking. This interest has led me to apply for the above named position. I am a follower of yours on social media having enjoyed eating in your café on a number of occasions and came across the advert online. Please accept my letter and my attached CV.

I am a friendly and approachable person and enjoy interacting with others and believe I would be an asset to the warm and welcoming environment of your café. I am keen to develop my skills by learning from others and help to make a positive impact to your business.

Thank you for taking your time to review my application. If you would like to discuss my application further, please do not hesitate to contact me on 00000000000 or email@gmail.com

Yours sincerely,

Melissa Clapton

APPLICATION FORMS

Some jobs may not accept a CV. Instead, they will ask you to fill out an application form. The job advertisement will usually include a **person specification** and will list the **essential criteria** needed for the job.

A **person specification** is like a **wish list** that an employer makes when they want to employ someone.

It will tell you what **essential criteria** you must meet to get the job:

What kind of person they want?

Example:

- organised.
- friendly.
- good at talking to people.

What skills you must have?

Example:

- using a computer.
- working with others.
- writing clearly.

What experience you need?

Example:

- working with young people.
- helping customers.
- working in a team.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Read the Person Specification Carefully

- Highlight each **essential criterion**.
- Treat each one as a **question you must answer**.
- Remember: if you don't show you meet all essential criteria, you usually won't be shortlisted.

On the application form; use each essential criteria as a heading. Write an example of how you meet the requirement.

You could use the STAR method for your answers.

S – Situation: What was happening?

T – Task: What was your responsibility?

A – Action: What did you do?

R – Result: What happened because of your actions?

Example (for “ability to communicate with young people”):

“In my role as..., I supported a group of young people (S).

I needed to help them to.... (T). I did this by... (A). As a result... (R).”



ASKING FOR MORE INFORMATION

Do you have a question or need more information before applying? There will be contact information with the job advert. You can email or phone.

Writing an email

Use:

- *"Dear..."*
- or *"Hello..."*

If you know their name, write:

- *"Dear Mrs Smith"*
- or *"Dear Sir/Madam"*
- *"Hello,"* is fine if you want to be less formal

Say who you are

Just one sentence, something like:

- *"My name is Melissa and I'm interested in the job you're advertising."*

Say which job you're talking about

This helps them know what you mean:

- *"I am writing about the Youth Support Worker role."*

Ask your question clearly

- *"Could you please tell me more about...?"*

Examples:

- *"Could you please tell me more about what the day-to-day work is like?"*
- *"Can you explain what kind of experience you're looking for?"*



ASKING FOR MORE INFORMATION (Cont.)

Say thank you

Always remember to be polite. Make a good first impression!

- *"Thank you for your time."*

Finish with your name

- *"Kind regards,"*
- *"Best wishes,"*

Then your name at the bottom.

Example email:

Subject: Question About the Youth Support Worker Job

Dear Mrs Smith,

My name is Melissa and I am interested in the Youth Support Worker role you are advertising. I am writing to ask if you are accepting applications from a 16-year-old school leaver?

Could you tell me a little more about what the day-to-day work involves, and the type of experience you are looking for?

Thank you very much for your time.

Kind regards,
Melissa

Volunteering

Volunteering can be a great way to get you experience, build up your skills, meet other people as well as giving you the feel good factor of making a difference in your community.



Opportunities...

Hartlepool has lots of volunteering opportunities to offer. Have you thought about....

- Charity shops: Customer service, sorting donations & merchandising.
- Local youth club: Developing and delivering social action projects, supporting youth workers to deliver programmes of work to other young people.
- Countryside team: Conservation, site management & surveying.
- Community Hubs: Events, community cafes, working with older people, marketing.
- Art Gallery: Project development, labelling and pricing of stock.
- Uniformed Services: Leader at Brownies, Girl Guides, Scouts etc.

Wherever you choose to volunteer, they have a duty to keep you safe and to make sure you have a positive experience.

The NSPCC have put together a list so you know what to look out for when thinking about your safety...

- **Written standards of good practice** – like a code of conduct. This sets out boundaries for staff and volunteers.
- **Complaint procedures** are in place.
- You should receive a **consent form** and share your parent/carer **emergency contact details**, and any relevant medical information about you.
- There is a **safer recruitment** process in place. This means they have references, criminal record checks and the right qualifications for the activity.
- Staff and volunteers are **trained in safeguarding**.
- You are properly **supervised** (based on age, ability, activity and venue) by adults who are suitable to support you.
- The activity takes place in a **safe environment** and they are separate changing rooms for adults and young people.

Know your Rights

Only young people over the age of 13 can work - but there are different rules for child performers.

You can only work full time once you are legally old enough to have left school - 16 years of age. Full time hours are a maximum of 40 hours per week.

You can have an apprenticeship from the age of 16. As an apprentice you would be paid a salary and expected to pay tax and National Insurance*

Still in school? You can't work before 7am or after 7pm. You have to have regular breaks. 1 hour break for 4 hours worked. You can only work in safe places... so you can't work in places like factories, industrial sites, pubs or betting shops.

Working Hours

During term time

Age	Maximum hours per week	Maximum hours on school days or Sundays	Maximum hours on Saturdays
13-14 years old	12	2	5
15-16 years old	12	2	8

Know your Rights (Cont.)

During school holidays

Age	Maximum hours per week	Maximum hours on school days or Sundays	Maximum hours on Saturdays
13-14 years old	25	5	2
15-16 years old	35	8	2

School leavers

16-18 year olds: You can work up to 40 hours a week. When you reach 18 then adult employment rights and rules apply.

Pay

Under 18? You aren't entitled to the National Living Wage but you may be expected to pay mandatory Tax and National Insurance. Find out more here:

[GOV.UK: National Minimum Wage Rates](#)

Holidays

You are entitled to the same amount of paid holiday as an adult. Find out more here:

[Citizen's Advice: Check if you're entitled to paid holidays](#)

Discrimination

Age is a protected characteristic by law under the Equality Act 2010. This means it's against the law to treat someone less favourably because of either:

- their age.
- the age they appear to be.

Know your **Rights** (Cont.)

Treated unfairly?

If you feel your rights have been breached e.g. you are being asked to work too long or working when you shouldn't be then you can contact ACAS. ACAS are Government funded and can help you with disputes. They'll help you decide your next step e.g. making a complaint to the Health and Safety Executive or your local council. This service is free of charge.

You can contact them here;

www.acas.org.uk

**This is a form of social security. This contribution you will make will go towards your pension or to help you if you are sick or unemployed. You pay mandatory National Insurance if you're 16 or over and are either an employee earning more than £242 per week from one job or self-employed and making a profit of more than £12,570 a year.*

ADVICE FROM EMPLOYERS

What guide would this be if we excluded the experts? (Hint: Not Good). We have asked a selection of Hartlepool employers who have seen some of the best (and some of the worst) CVs to provide some words of wisdom to support you in writing your CV and cover letter.

Daisy and Beas (Café and play area in Hartlepool)

"It's less about your exam results and more about you, are you friendly? Are you approachable? Are you happy to engage with customers? I would be looking for some examples of that- even if it's something you've done at school.

I get lot's of cv's and sometimes just messages too, Some just say "Have you got any jobs" which tells me they're not very interested and I get others that are polite, friendly and tell me something about themselves .. It really makes a difference."



Mark Lloyd – Master Goldsmith (Jewellery retailer and maker in Hartlepool)

"It's all about people skills. I want someone that is confident and can communicate and wants to be part of a team and can think on their feet. You need to be able to talk to people and if you don't know something, don't be afraid to ask!

On a CV... I want to hear something about them as well as things like being punctual and motivated.

Think about being smart and presentable when you meet people too.

It's not necessarily the experience we need... we can teach you that, but we need to know you have the right attitude and are willing to learn."



ADVICE FROM EMPLOYERS

Barry Kennedy
(Manager of Belle Vue Sports Community
and Youth Centre)



"I personally don't like CV's to be too long (several pages) as often things are repeated or said in a similar way. I like a CV to be to the point highlighting strengths, experience both from a work perspective and in life too. I've seen many scan over their school exam results and some often don't put much of an emphasis on qualifications they actually have."

"In terms of volunteers, we like enthusiasm and people that want to do good for the centre and its users. In simple terms we want volunteers that are committed and show up every week. In return we will support volunteers with qualifications to gain and set a pathway to employment with us if that is what they would want. I myself started as a volunteer at the centre as I had an interest in football and general sport and this passion helped me gain opportunities to help young people and here we are over 20 years later!!"

"Many other volunteers have gone on to become employees and forged successful careers in youth work, schools, and other services."

David Grainge
(Leisure and Facilities Manager
at Hartlepool Borough Council)



"For the leisure centre's we need people with a good work ethic who have a flexible attitude to work."

"They need to be able to communicate effectively with good verbal skills and positive body language, be upbeat and approachable."

You may notice that a lot of things mentioned here are soft skills. You can build up your soft skills by volunteering in your community and being involved with youth group projects.

Further Info & Links

Hartlepool

- [*Hartlepool Jobs and Skills*](#)
- [*Hartlepool.gov.uk: Adult and Community Learning*](#)
- [*Hartlepool Now: Community Volunteering in Hartlepool*](#)
- [*Hartlepool Family Hubs*](#)

Youth Service links

- [*Hartlepool Now: Youth Voice Hartlepool*](#)
- [*Hartlepool Now: Stand Together*](#)
- [*Hartlepool Now: Duke of Edinburgh Award*](#)

National

- [*Youthemployment.org.uk*](#)
- [*Skillsforcareers.education.gov.uk: Young People*](#)

