How to write an effective CV

LONDON SCHOOL of HYGIENE &TROPICAL MEDICINE

Agenda

- How to get through recruiter screenings – and get more interviews
- How to get through Applicant Tracking System - and stop getting auto-rejected
- Top tips and resources

Quick Introduction

Josh Phillips

- Careers Consultant at LSHTM (Wed-Fri) supporting people in public and global health to build fulfilling, sustainable careers
- Background across consulting, research, NGOs, startups, charities.
- PhD (QMUL), Cambridge alum, qualified coach

Poll (At Start)

How clear and confident do you feel about your CV writing?

Please complete **Question 1** and click **Submit**

https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/Ye2txWnCHJ

How to get through recruiter screenings – and get more interviews

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Tailor your CV

- Optimise your CV for that position
- Extract skill words from the JD
- Mirror the order skills appear in the JD
- Do this for education and experience
- If you don't have all the skills that's ok, match as many as you can

JD

About You:

We are seeking a passionate and driven individual who will thrive in a complex and dynamic working environment

- You will be highly organised with the ability to manage several ongoing projects in tandem. Able to work with numerous stakeholders and manage resources
- You will have demonstrated analytical skills
- You will have excellent communication skills, both orally and in writing. You will be able to clearly articulate existing business challenges, findings, and recommendations through written reports and oral presentations

CV

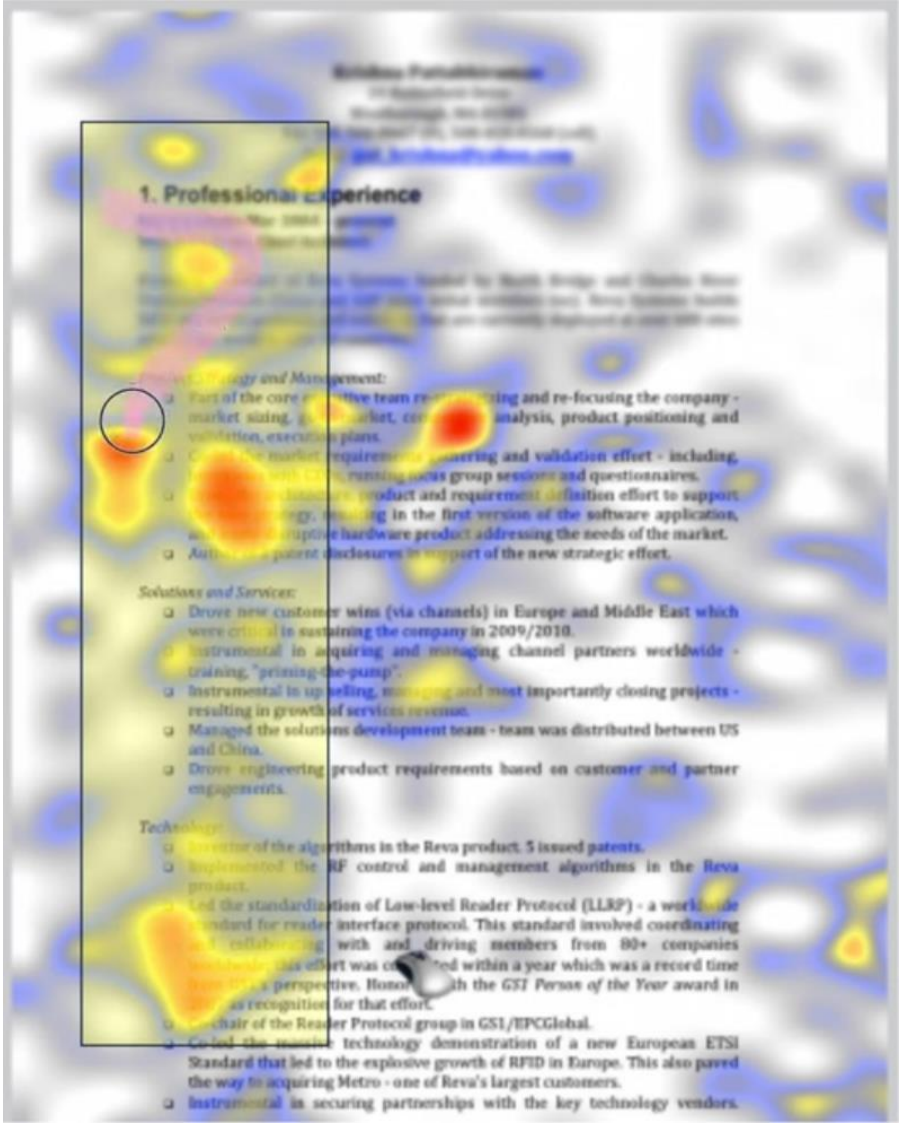
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

07-09/2022 **Intermix Cobalt - Internship** *Derby*

- **Organisation skills**: Google spreadsheet created to track the work of 3 colleagues, in order to avoid duplication in converting handwritten delivery records into an electronic database
- **Analytical skills**:
- **Communication skills**:

Optimise your CV layout

- Put what they are looking for – where they are looking for it
- Recruiters scan left column for relevant keywords
- Only read across when they find relevant skills
- CV read for 3.9 seconds (median) – 5.1 seconds (mean) on average
- Matching skills = buys you more time
- Put your skills in the golden left column



Use your bullets to tell a story

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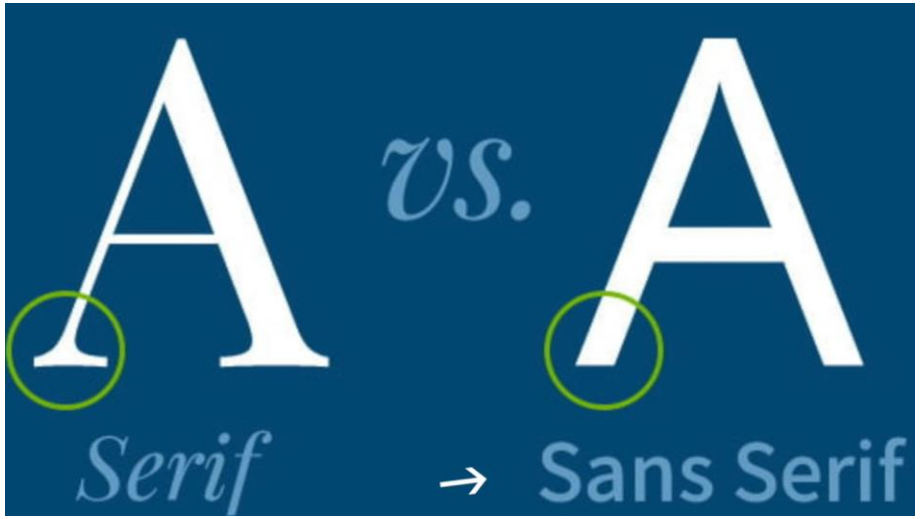
- Story makes skills come to life
- Give an example as evidence of how you used that skill
- Add numbers where possible for quantifiable evidence
- Communicate value with every bullet point
- For example:

Organisation skills: Google spreadsheet created to track the work of 3 colleagues, in order to avoid duplication in converting handwritten delivery records into an electronic database

Communication skills: Used open questions, summarising and paraphrasing techniques when presenting in seminar sessions with upwards of 12 peers

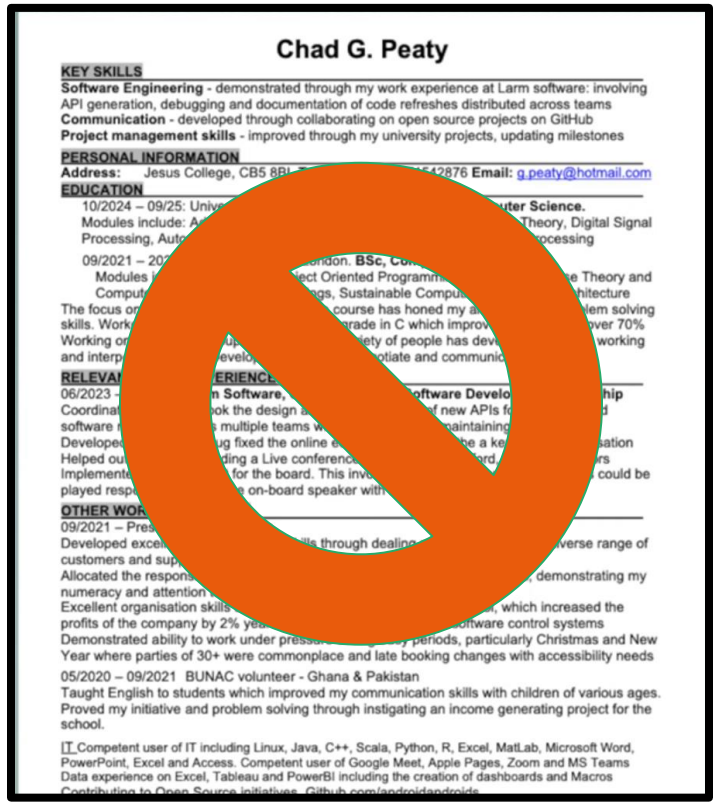
Optimise your CV design

- **Select your font carefully**
  - Font influences feeling
  - Clean lines indicate clear thinking
  - San serif is more effective
  - Best = Century Gothic, Browallia New, DengXian (11.5pts)



Optimise your CV design

- **Use blank space**
  - Blank space is not dead space
  - Allows reader to digest information



Chad G. Peaty

KEY SKILLS

Software Engineering - demonstrated through my work experience at Larm software: involving API generation, debugging and documentation of code refreshes distributed across teams
Communication - developed through collaborating on open source projects on GitHub
Project management skills - improved through my university projects, updating milestones

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Address: Jesus College, CB5 8BL **Email:** g.peaty@hotmail.com

EDUCATION

10/2024 – 09/25: Univ **uter Science.**
Modules include: A Theory, Digital Signal Processing, Auto ocessing

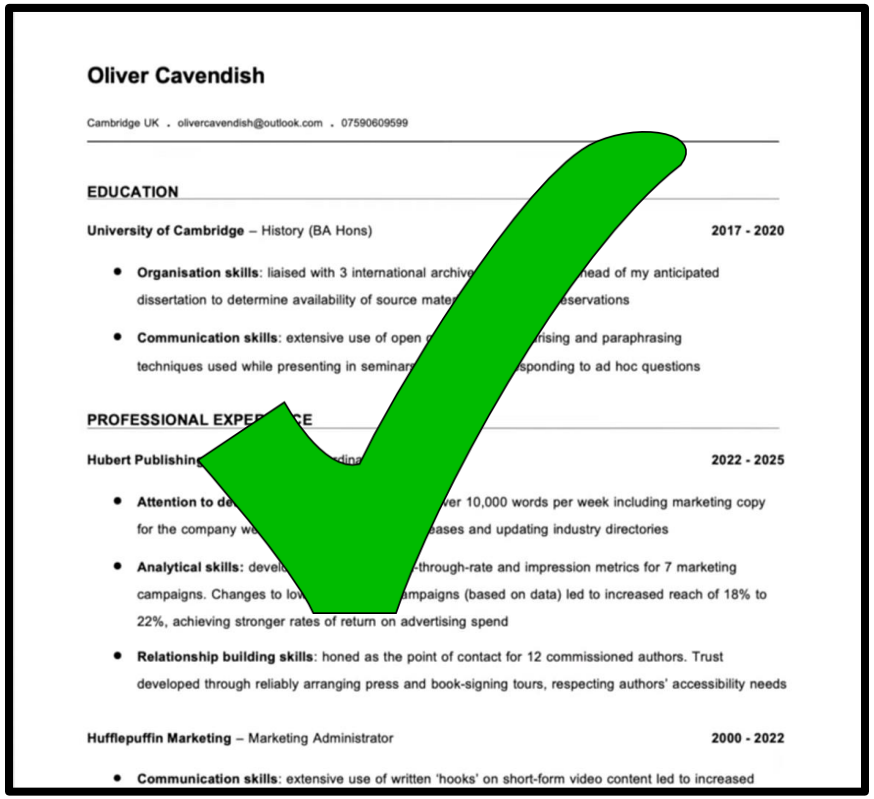
09/2021 – 202 ndon. **BSc, Co**
Modules i ect Oriented Programm e Theory and Comput ngs, Sustainable Comput hitecture
The focus o course has honed my a lem solving skills. Work rade in C which improv over 70% Working o iety of people has dev working and interp evelo ptiate and communic

RELEVA ERIENCE
06/2023 - **n Software, oftware Develo hip**
Coordinat ok the design a f new APIs f d software r multiple teams w aintaining Developed ug fixed the online e be a ke ation Helped ou ding a Live conferenc ord rs Implement for the board. This inv could be played resp on-board speaker with

OTHER WOR
09/2021 – Pres lls through dealing verse range of customers and sup Allocated the respons , demonstrating my numeracy and attention Excellent organisation skills , which increased the profits of the company by 2% ye ftware control systems Demonstrated ability to work under pres periods, particularly Christmas and New Year where parties of 30+ were commonplace and late booking changes with accessibility needs

05/2020 – 09/2021 BUNAC volunteer - Ghana & Pakistan
Taught English to students which improved my communication skills with children of various ages. Proved my initiative and problem solving through instigating an income generating project for the school.

IT Competent user of IT including Linux, Java, C++, Scala, Python, R, Excel, MatLab, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Access. Competent user of Google Meet, Apple Pages, Zoom and MS Teams Data experience on Excel, Tableau and PowerBI including the creation of dashboards and Macros Contributing to Open Source initiatives. Github.com/androidandroide



Oliver Cavendish

Cambridge UK . olivercavendish@outlook.com . 07590609599

EDUCATION

University of Cambridge – History (BA Hons) **2017 - 2020**

- **Organisation skills**: liaised with 3 international archiv head of my anticipated dissertation to determine availability of source mate bservations
- **Communication skills**: extensive use of open rising and paraphrasing techniques used while presenting in seminar sponding to ad hoc questions

PROFESSIONAL EXPER CE

Hubert Publishing **2022 - 2025**

- **Attention to de** ver 10,000 words per week including marketing copy for the company w bases and updating industry directories
- **Analytical skills:** devel -through-rate and impression metrics for 7 marketing campaigns. Changes to lo mpaigns (based on data) led to increased reach of 18% to 22%, achieving stronger rates of return on advertising spend
- **Relationship building skills**: honed as the point of contact for 12 commissioned authors. Trust developed through reliably arranging press and book-signing tours, respecting authors' accessibility needs

Hufflepuffin Marketing – Marketing Administrator **2000 - 2022**

- **Communication skills**: extensive use of written 'hooks' on short-form video content led to increased

Optimise your CV design

- **Contrast**
  - Black text on white background
  - Low contrast areas (e.g. grey) suggest lower value
- **Compositional balance**
  - Some text balanced on right hand side, for example dates, locations
- **Avoid italics**
- **Use bold sparingly**

Oliver Cavendish

Cambridge UK , olivercavendish@outlook.com , 07590609599

EDUCATION

University of Cambridge – History (BA Hons) **2017 - 2020**

- **Organisation skills**: liaised with 3 international archive centres a year ahead of my anticipated dissertation to determine availability of source material and secured reservations
- **Communication skills**: extensive use of open questions, summarising and paraphrasing techniques used while presenting in seminars of 12+ peers, responding to ad hoc questions

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Hubert Publishing Co – Marketing Coordinator **2022 - 2025**

- **Attention to detail**: developed by proof-reading over 10,000 words per week including marketing copy for the company website, book-launch press releases and updating industry directories
- **Analytical skills**: developed by tracking click-through-rate and impression metrics for 7 marketing campaigns. Changes to lower performing campaigns (based on data) led to increased reach of 18% to 22%, achieving stronger return on advertising spend
- **Relationship building skills**: honed as the point of contact for 12 commissioned authors. Trust developed through reliably arranging press and book-signing tours, respecting authors' accessibility needs

Hufflepuffin Marketing – Marketing Administrator **2000 - 2022**

- **Communication skills**: extensive use of written 'hooks' on short-form video content led to increased viewer retention from 23% to 35%
- **Attention to detail**: maintained client records consistent with GDPR guidelines and ran mock data audits to check for compliance with data requests. Stored data on secure servers and ensured VPN usage when colleagues interacted with this data

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Experienced user of Canva, Adobe In-Design, Tableau and Capcut

How to get through Applicant Tracking System (ATS) – and stop getting auto-rejected

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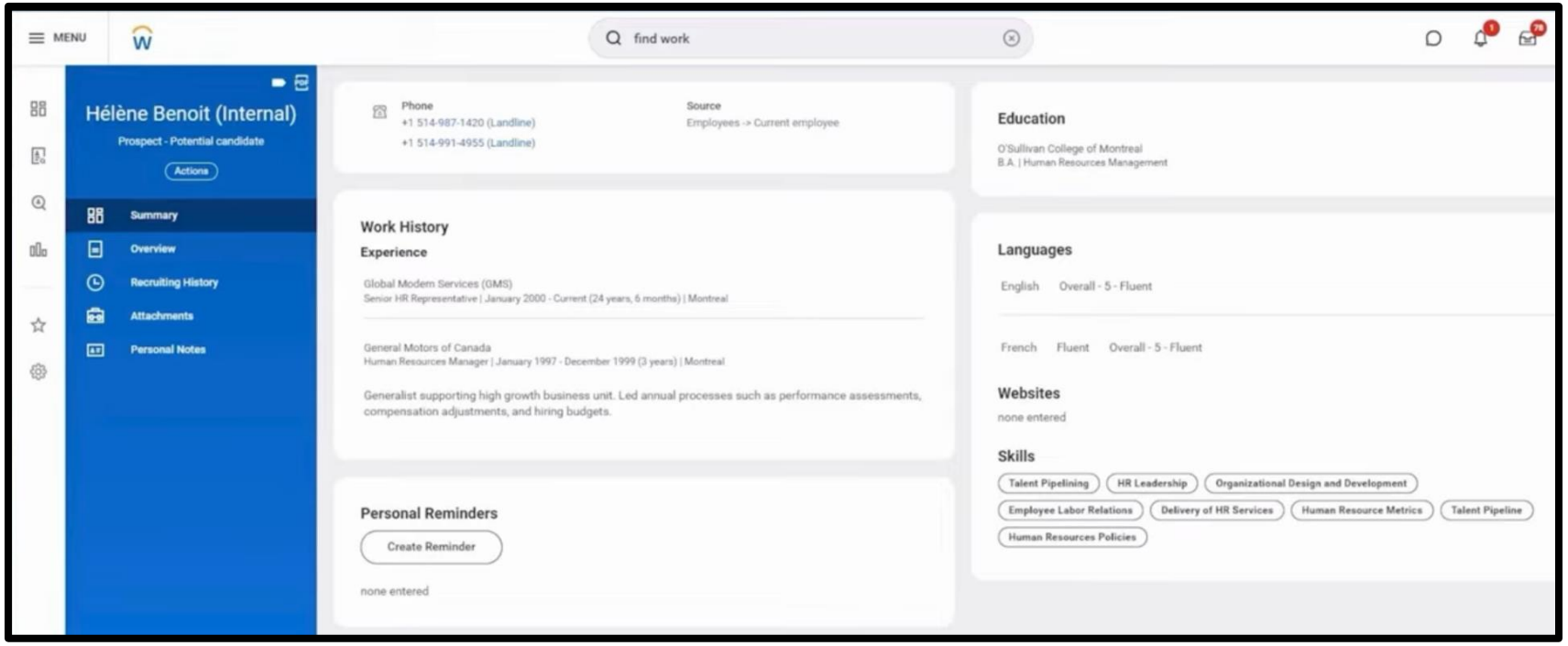
What happens to your job application when you hit submit?

- A profile is created on recuiter ATS (e.g. workday)
- If you submitted a CV the ATS will “parse” or scan it to populate profile fields on ATS



Why are you getting auto-rejected?

- **Reason 1: Pre-screening questions**
  - Mandatory Yes or No questions
  - For example: Do you have right to work in the UK?
  - Yes = accepted by recruiter
  - No = auto-rejected by recruiter

- **Reason 2: Job is no longer live**
  - Filled
  - Upper limit of applications
  - Job never existed – ghost job

Why are you getting auto-rejected?

- **Reason 3: Keyword / skill mismatch**
  - Not used JD keywords/skills in application/CV
  - Low ranking - not appearing on front page for recruiters
  - Low ranking – auto-rejected below certain ranking

- **Reason 4: Your application is incomplete**
  - Missing fields
  - CV not scanned or read properly by ATS (see next slide)

How to make your CV ATS-compliant

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- Must be readable by ATS Optical Character Recognition (OCR)

OCR step	What this means: how to ensure you have an ATS-compliant CV
1. Image acquisition	**Upload sufficiently high-resolution CV**
2. Pre-processing	**Avoid: multiple columns, colours, graphics, many different alignments** **Include: clear headings for each section**
3. Text detection	**Use sans serif fonts only** (e.g. DengXian)
4. Text recognition	**Submit CV in Microsoft Word** (not PDF, unless specified)
5. Pos-processing	**Use characters from only one language group** (e.g. UK English)

How to beat the algorithm

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Step 1: Take the exact skill words from the Job Description

JD

About You:

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- You will have demonstrated analytical skills
- You will have excellent communication skills, both orally and in writing. You will be able to clearly articulate existing business challenges, findings, and recommendations through written reports and oral presentations

Step 2: Import the skill words into your CV, and write a sentence describing how you used that skill

CV

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

07-09/2022 **Intermix Cobalt - Internship** *Derby*

- **Organisation skills**: Google spreadsheet created to track the work of 3 colleagues, in order to avoid duplication in converting handwritten delivery records into an electronic database
- **Analytical skills**:
- **Communication skills**:

How to beat the algorithm

- Ensure 70+% of the bullet points on your CV start with the skill words listed in the Job Description
- Then you will rank at the top and beat the algorithm

History A* English Literature A Mathematics B

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

07-09/2022 **Intermix Cobalt - Internship** *Derby*

- **Organisation skills**: Google spreadsheet created to track the work of 3 colleagues, in order to avoid duplication in converting handwritten delivery records into an electronic database
- **Analytical skills**:
- **Communication skills**:

07-09/2021 **Fitzbillies Cafe – Customer & Service Associate** *Cambridge*

- **Communication skills**:
- **Teamwork skills**:

Other top tips and resources

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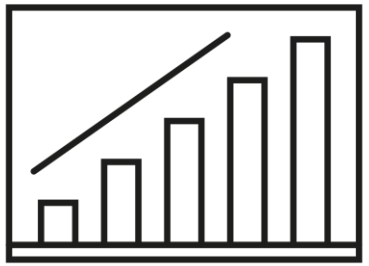
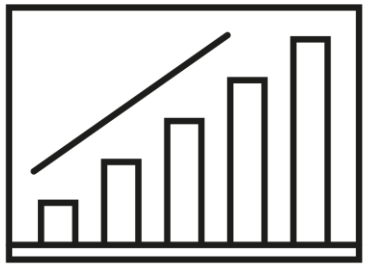
Top tips

- **Don't** start your bullet points with action/active verb - instead start with relevant *skill* word
- **Don't** use colours and graphics - it slows the reader down and not ATS-friendly
- **Don't** use skills bars / circles - they are subjective and hard to interpret
- **Don't** use profile section / summary / about at top – slows reader down, repetition of points below



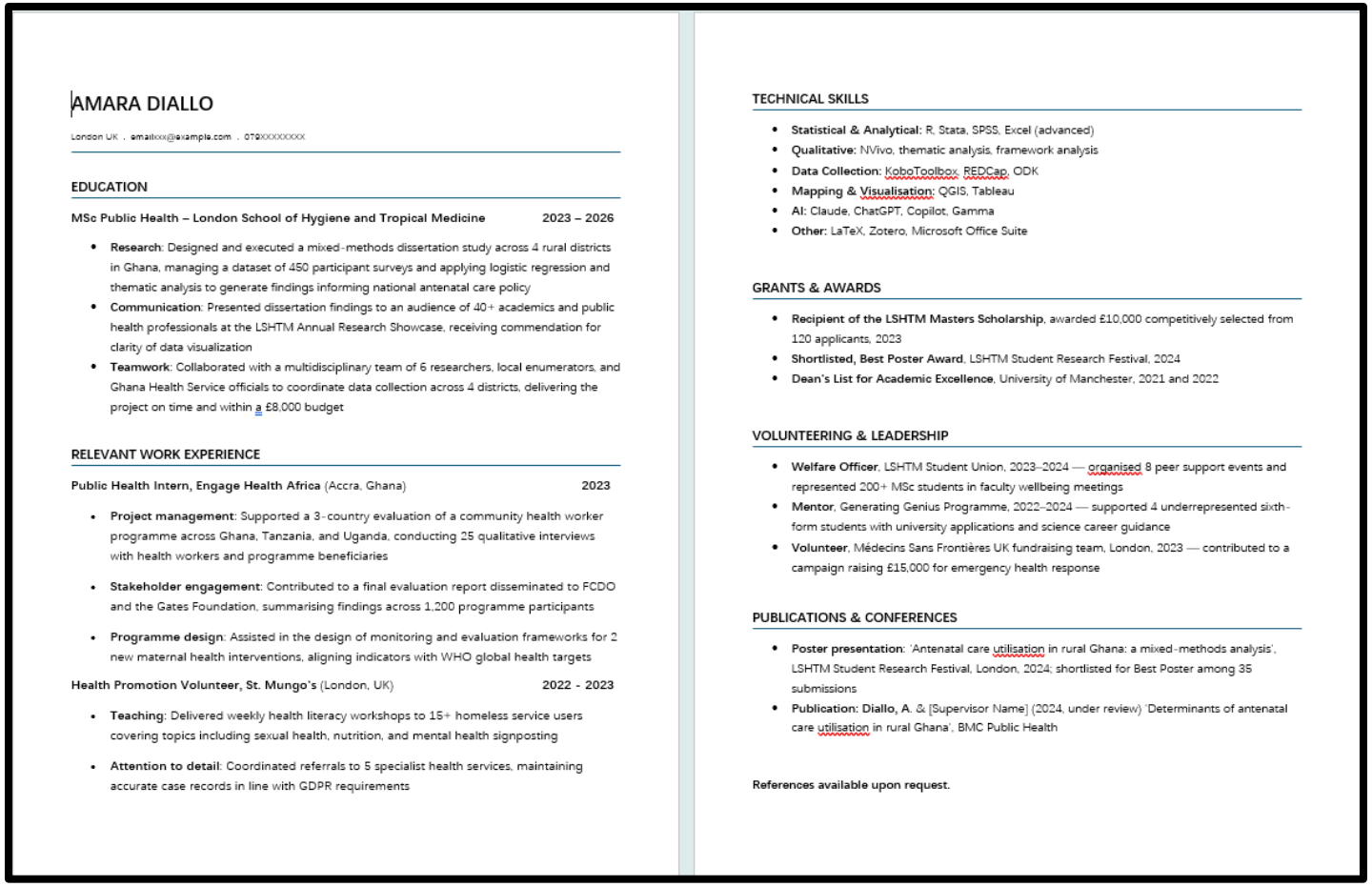
Top tips

- **Length? It depends!**
  - 1-page sometimes best for industry/consulting
  - 2-pages best for general public/global health roles
  - 2+ pages best for academic CVs (including selected publications, conferences, etc.)
- **Personal details?**
  - Include: Name, City + Country, Email, Phone
  - Don’t include: Full address, NI number, DOB
- **References?**
  - Put references on request at the bottom
  - Only share reference details during official offer stage



CV Template

- Click here to download our top CV Template in editable Word format



AMARA DIALLO

London UK . amaitxx@example.com . 079XXXXXXXX

EDUCATION

MSc Public Health – London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine **2023 – 2026**

- **Research**: Designed and executed a mixed-methods dissertation study across 4 rural districts in Ghana, managing a dataset of 450 participant surveys and applying logistic regression and thematic analysis to generate findings informing national antenatal care policy
- **Communication**: Presented dissertation findings to an audience of 40+ academics and public health professionals at the LSHTM Annual Research Showcase, receiving commendation for clarity of data visualization
- **Teamwork**: Collaborated with a multidisciplinary team of 6 researchers, local enumerators, and Ghana Health Service officials to coordinate data collection across 4 districts, delivering the project on time and within a £8,000 budget

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

Public Health Intern, Engage Health Africa (Accra, Ghana) **2023**

- **Project management**: Supported a 3-country evaluation of a community health worker programme across Ghana, Tanzania, and Uganda, conducting 25 qualitative interviews with health workers and programme beneficiaries
- **Stakeholder engagement**: Contributed to a final evaluation report disseminated to FCDO and the Gates Foundation, summarising findings across 1,200 programme participants
- **Programme design**: Assisted in the design of monitoring and evaluation frameworks for 2 new maternal health interventions, aligning indicators with WHO global health targets

Health Promotion Volunteer, St. Mungo's (London, UK) **2022 - 2023**

- **Teaching**: Delivered weekly health literacy workshops to 15+ homeless service users covering topics including sexual health, nutrition, and mental health signposting
- **Attention to detail**: Coordinated referrals to 5 specialist health services, maintaining accurate case records in line with GDPR requirements

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **Statistical & Analytical:** R, Stata, SPSS, Excel (advanced)
- **Qualitative:** NVivo, thematic analysis, framework analysis
- **Data Collection:** KoboToolbox, REDCap, ODK
- **Mapping & Visualisation:** QGIS, Tableau
- **AI:** Claude, ChatGPT, Copilot, Gamma
- **Other:** LaTeX, Zotero, Microsoft Office Suite

GRANTS & AWARDS

- **Recipient of the LSHTM Masters Scholarship**, awarded £10,000 competitively selected from 120 applicants, 2023
- **Shortlisted, Best Poster Award**, LSHTM Student Research Festival, 2024
- **Dean's List for Academic Excellence**, University of Manchester, 2021 and 2022

VOLUNTEERING & LEADERSHIP

- **Welfare Officer**, LSHTM Student Union, 2023–2024 — organised 8 peer support events and represented 200+ MSc students in faculty wellbeing meetings
- **Mentor**, Generating Genius Programme, 2022–2024 — supported 4 underrepresented sixth-form students with university applications and science career guidance
- **Volunteer**, Médecins Sans Frontières UK fundraising team, London, 2023 — contributed to a campaign raising £15,000 for emergency health response

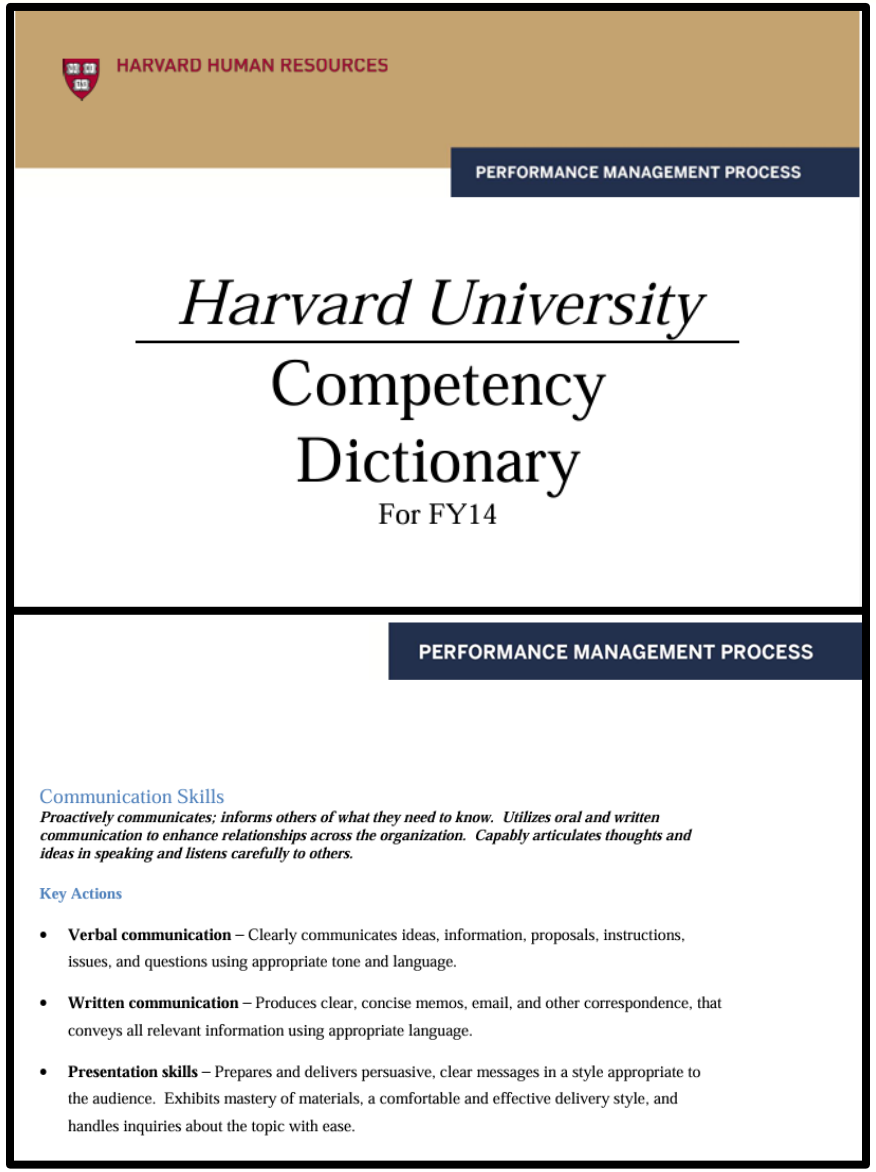
PUBLICATIONS & CONFERENCES

- **Poster presentation**: 'Antenatal care utilisation in rural Ghana: a mixed-methods analysis', LSHTM Student Research Festival, London, 2024; shortlisted for Best Poster among 35 submissions
- **Publication: Diallo, A.** & [Supervisor Name] (2024, under review) 'Determinants of antenatal care utilisation in rural Ghana', BMC Public Health

References available upon request.

Harvard University Competency Dictionary

- Gives you sub-components of specific skills
- Use this to evidence skills effectively in your CV
- Click here to view (PDF)



HARVARD HUMAN RESOURCES

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Harvard University

Competency Dictionary

For FY14

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Communication Skills

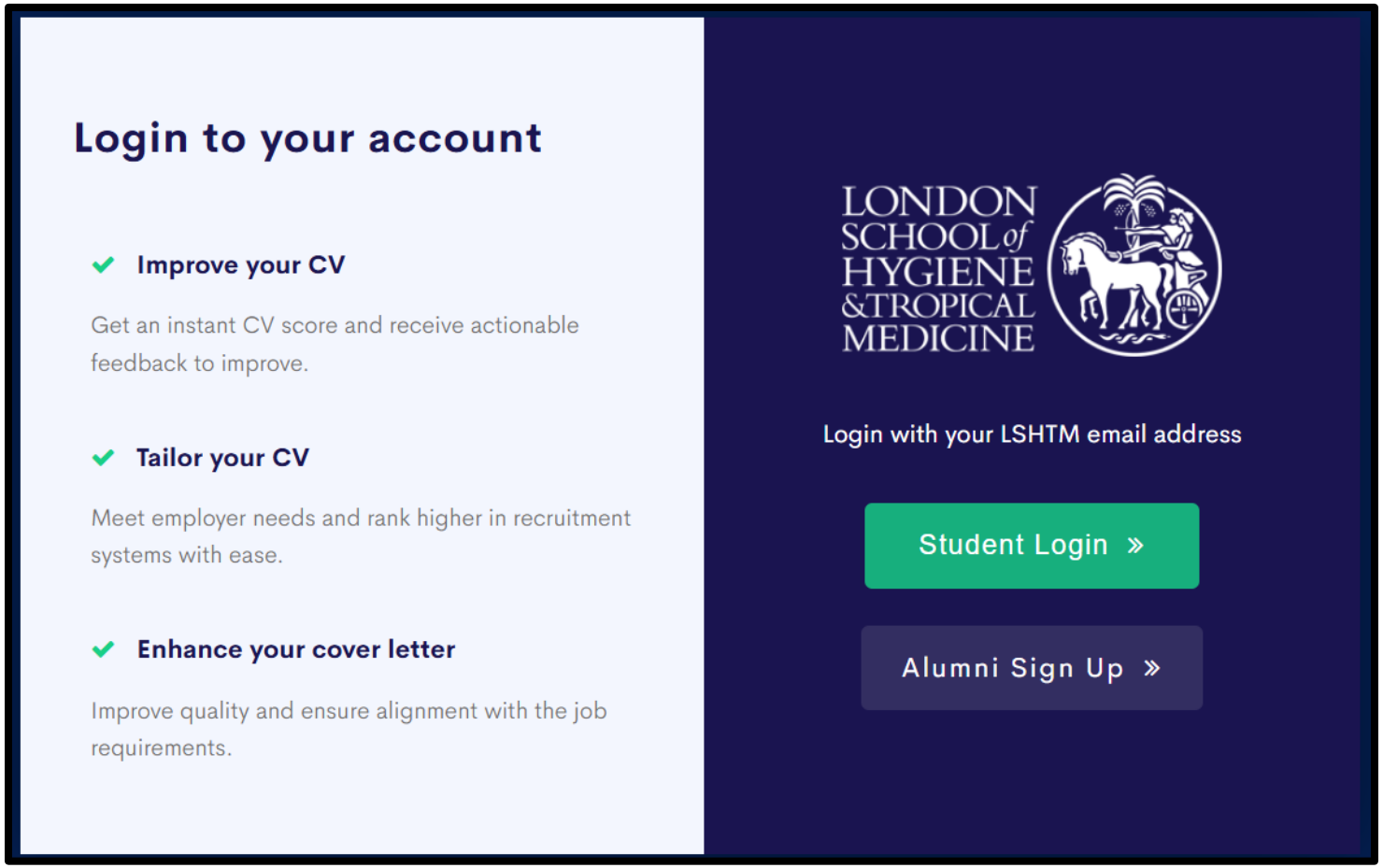
Proactively communicates; informs others of what they need to know. Utilizes oral and written communication to enhance relationships across the organization. Capably articulates thoughts and ideas in speaking and listens carefully to others.

Key Actions

- **Verbal communication –** Clearly communicates ideas, information, proposals, instructions, issues, and questions using appropriate tone and language.
- **Written communication –** Produces clear, concise memos, email, and other correspondence, that conveys all relevant information using appropriate language.
- **Presentation skills –** Prepares and delivers persuasive, clear messages in a style appropriate to the audience. Exhibits mastery of materials, a comfortable and effective delivery style, and handles inquiries about the topic with ease.

CareerSet

- Click here to improve and tailor your CV using CareerSet



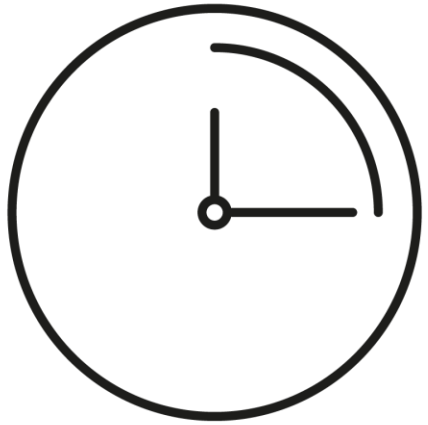
Recap

- **How to get through recruiter screenings**
  - Tailor your CV
  - Optimise layout
  - Bullets tell story
  - Optimise design
- **How to get through Applicant Tracking System**
  - Reasons for auto-rejection
  - How to be ATS compliant
  - How to beat the algorithm
- **Top tips and resources**
  - Do’s + Don’ts
  - CV Template + CareerSet

Your next step

- After this session what is one specific action you will take in the next 48 hours?

Write your answer in the chat



Poll (At End)

How clear and confident do you feel about your CV writing now?

Please complete **Question 2** and click **Submit**

https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/Ye2txWnCHJ

Q&A

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Thank you

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