

Detailing your education and qualifications

If your education and qualifications are your strongest selling point, then you'll want to put this information close to the top of your CV. This is especially true if you are a recent graduate, obtained excellent academic results or have gained a professional qualification which is a prerequisite for the job you're applying for.

7 a In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 Where should you put the education section of your CV?
- 2 What qualifications should you include?

b Read the article about how to write about your education in your CV and answer the following questions.

- 1 Why should recent graduates put the education section near the top of their CV?
- 2 What term does the author use to mean *just the main pieces of information, nothing more*?
- 3 Under what two circumstances would you include your A-level results in a CV?
- 4 What qualifications should you mention first?
- 5 What should you do if you're searching for employment in the IT field?

Education Education Education

Should your education be proudly at the top of the CV or among the optional sections at the end? It all depends on who you are and what job you are trying to get. If you have just left school, college or university, your education experience is going to be more immediately relevant and should therefore be prominently displayed early on. Your potential employer may be keen to hire recent graduates and will wish to see exactly what your educational attainments are. This means you can give plenty of detail of curricula, theses and grades. However, if you have been in the world of work for 20 years, your education is of little interest to an employer and should go in skeletal form near the bottom of the CV. What you have achieved since leaving full-time education is

obviously more indicative of your value.

Another thing to bear in mind is that higher qualifications imply lower ones. If you have only got GCSEs, fine. If, however, you have a bachelor's degree, it is unnecessary to mention your GCSEs, or even your A-levels, unless they are spectacularly good. A recruiter will simply assume they were taken at the usual time and is unlikely to be interested in how many there were and what grades they were. The same applies to a Master's degree or PhD. The higher qualification makes the mention of any lower ones redundant.

If you feel you need to mention more in the way of academic attainment, for example as a recent graduate or as someone with professional

qualifications or other postgraduate training, the section should be organised in reverse chronological order, like your work experience section.

Finally, the education section can be the place to mention the all-important computer skills that continue to dominate working life. Different jobs and professions will require you to have an understanding of different computer packages, and if you have good working knowledge of these it is worth mentioning that you know they exist, or have been trained to use them. If you are applying for a job more closely related to IT, your technical proficiencies should have a relevant section of their own (entitled 'computer efficiency' or 'computer skills' or 'technical expertise') much higher up the priority list.

c What five types of qualification are mentioned in the text? Put them in order from highest to lowest.

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

d In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 What are the equivalent qualifications from Exercise 7c in your own country?
- 2 Would the advice in the text be relevant if you were applying for a job in your own country?
- 3 At the moment in the UK most university students study for three years (four years in Scotland) to gain a bachelor's degree. Some students then decide to continue at university for one or two years to do postgraduate studies and gain a Master's degree. How does the higher education system in your country compare to this system?

e In pairs, tell each other about your qualifications. Compare them to the qualifications in Exercise 7c using the phrases in the box.

something like which is equivalent to

I have a Physics degree from Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich, which is equivalent to a BSc in Physics in the UK.

I have a licentiate degree from teacher training college. It was a three-year course, so something like a BEd in the UK. I got my Master's a few years ago.

f Look at the extract from the education section of a CV. In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 Why has the writer given additional information about their qualifications (in brackets)?
- 2 Will you need to explain any of your qualifications? How?
- 3 What other details has the writer included in this section?
- 4 What else could you include in the education section of your CV?

University of Ulster

- BSc Hons (2.1) European Regional Development (human geography and macro economics)
- 3-month work placement: Economic Researcher, Northern Ireland Civil Service, Belfast
- Exchange year: Diploma in Area Studies, University of Zaragoza, Spain (economic geography and Spanish)
- Dissertation: The role of EU funds on regional development in Aragon, Spain

g Think of a job you would like to apply for and write the education section of your CV. Use examples from this unit to help you.

h Look at Silvia's skills-based CV on page 21. Apart from the list of dates and places she has studied, identify five sentences which mention her education and qualifications.