

# Preparing a professional resume

## Key features of an effective resume

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**Ideally three (3) pages long**

*(Depending on your experiences, requirements of specific employers and the country in which you are applying)*

**Mainly in point form**

*(Keep paragraphs brief and use only where required; employers may skip long blocks of text)*

**Markets you to the specific employer/industry**

*(Tailor your resume to the specific requirements of the job and organisation)*

**Persuades the employer of your future capabilities with specific evidence**

*(List relevant skills, strengths and knowledge acquired from your degree and other experiences; provide evidence by adding specifics such as number of staff supervised)*

**Promotional in written style and word usage**

*(Use active words (verbs) and positive words to indicate strong skills and experiences)*

**Absence of errors**

*(Check and re-check spelling, grammar and formatting; have others review it)*

**In proportion and logical**

*(Write the most about the most relevant qualifications and experiences; present information in a logical order)*

**Edited and re-edited work**

*(Be concise; use a thesaurus to enhance your expression)*

## Presentation

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Choose clear typefaces/fonts.

Create a clear, uncluttered appearance.

Make appropriate use of bold, underlining and italics, but don't overdo it.

Be consistent in the use of headings, margins and tabs.

Place dates (years spent in the role) in the left margin as a general rule. Ensure your name appears in the header or footer of each page.

Number the pages of your resume.

# Resume Worksheet

## PERSONAL DETAILS

Name (usually your full name)  
Address (home address, include vacation address if relevant)  
Telephone (home number and mobile)  
E-mail (check your e-mail regularly and use a professional email address using your own name rather than -sexydood@hotmail.com)

It is not necessary to include -Date of Birth and -Marital Status. If you don't have Australian citizenship, you might want to provide details of your visa status and hours you are able to work if applying for a permanent job.

## CAREER GOAL

A career goal is an optional addition, but the fact that you have thought about this is likely to impress a prospective employer. Your statement should be clear and concise and should encompass the job for which you are applying.

*The best starting point for a great career objective is to think about what motivates you to work in a particular field and what you want to achieve. Once you capture this, then tailor it to the specific industry. Start with a general career objective and modify it as you apply for different positions and organisations.*

### Example:

"My aim is to contribute my enthusiasm, empathy and skills developed through my qualifications and experience working with people with disabilities. I am passionate about assisting others to achieve equity of access and the services necessary to fulfil their dreams".

### Possible format for a career goal:

To obtain a ..... position in ..... organisation / industry / field that will enable me to use my ..... skills and experience in ..... and provide the opportunity to contribute / develop .....

## EDUCATIONAL

Include the name of the qualification, the institution(s), and if it is to your advantage, grade point average / results (explain the ranking). You could indicate when you will finish your current degree. Inform the employer about the relevance of your degree by including some of the following:

- Major(s)
- Key subjects (subjects most relevant to the job you're applying for)
- Projects / dissertations (individual or group – relevant to the job, or where they effectively demonstrate your practical abilities or achievements)
- Key skills developed (examples of skills the degree has developed – e.g. case management, developing return to work plans, analytical and problem-solving skills; ability to plan and meet deadlines; report writing etc.)
- Special achievements

## OTHER TRAINING

You may have undertaken a range of other courses – e.g. computing, St John’s Ambulance, Occupational Health and Safety certificates. List these in reverse chronological order naming the qualification, where you obtained it and the duration of the program.

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

This category normally includes all employment, including paid and unpaid work, clinical placements, vacation employment etc.

Consider including the following:

Dates of employment (present positions in reverse chronological order)

Organisation and position name – indicate duration of employment, and hours per week if less than full-time.

Responsibilities and Skills Developed

1. Use point form.
2. Give greatest attention to your most relevant responsibilities and skills.
3. Emphasise transferable skills; general skills that are relevant to the position you are now seeking (eg. team work, communication, etc).
4. Highlight your achievements. Include awards, citations, and special commendations from your employer (e.g. nominated three times for - employee of the year). Include any special innovations or initiatives that you were particularly proud of.
5. Begin each entry with an action word – present tense for work continuing, past tense for work that has ceased.
6. Resist the temptation to add too many tasks for each role or position - between three and seven is considered reasonable.
7. Provide more detail about jobs relevant to the position you are applying for. Less relevant employment may be dealt with in two or three lines.

Further tips for adding impact:

- To emphasise professional experience consider splitting your employment history into sub- sections (eg. Professional Experience, Clinical Placements, Other Experience etc)
- For less relevant jobs, consider presenting these only very briefly, perhaps as a group. (Eg 20XX—20XX, Bar Attendant, list the employers and present the responsibilities and skills together)
- If you have current or previous relevant professional experience, you may wish to place your Employment History’ before Educational Background’.
- If you have completed prac placements or internships as part of your course, including brief quotes from supervisors following each prac listed can have great impact!

## COMPUTER PROFICIENCY

You may wish to include a separate section detailing your computing skills in which you name the programs you are able to use and describe your standard of proficiency – e.g. competent in Microsoft Office, highly proficient in the use of Autocad etc. (Alternatively, you could include skills in this category under -Skills and Attributes.)

## SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

Outline the key skills you have to offer a prospective employer. Include any skills relevant to the job (refer to Appendix 2) include skills specific to your discipline (eg. market research skills) and transferable/general skills (eg. teamwork, communication skills).

For each skill state evidence to support your claim. For example —Excellent written communication skills demonstrated by obtaining credits and distinctions in 80% of my assignments or -Strong analytical and research skills as a result of assignments and research projects in my degree. Consider how you how you might set this section out. Here are two examples.

**Example 1** Strong research and analytical skills (excellent results in two independent studies)

**Example 2 Strong research and analytical skills**

Excellent results in two independent studies

Research project for Brisbane City Council used in major planning initiative

Employed as research assistant for one month (Xmas vacation)

To ensure accuracy in describing your skills, it may be useful to reflect on the level of skill you are claiming. Consider the continuum below.



Including a skills profile the first page of your resume can be particularly effective for mature age students who have substantial experience as it allows them to reinforce the value of this experience in a relevant way.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

This is an opportunity to illustrate your achievements – scholarships, high grades, prizes, awards, events or productions you have organised, Golden Key Membership etc.

Do not limit yourself to awards only. Think laterally about your achievements. For example, you may have received a high result for a particular assignment or received excellent feedback from a customer or supervisor.

## MEMBERSHIPS

Consider joining a professional association relevant to your degree (see the Careers and Employment Service web site for details) as it offers many benefits including demonstrating you are interested and involved in your profession.

Other memberships, for example, community groups, Red Cross, youth groups, sporting associations and interest groups are also useful to consider including.

## OVERSEAS TRAVEL

Include overseas travel if it has enabled you to develop valuable skills and an understanding of other cultures and it is relevant to positions for which you are applying.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND LEISURE INTERESTS

Employers like to know about your participation in extra-curricular activities, as involvement in these non-academic pursuits demonstrates initiative and the capacity to balance a number of commitments. Outline any relevant responsibilities, especially ones contributing to the development of transferable/general skills.

## REFEREES

Include the names and contact details of two or three referees. Choose past/present employers and lecturers who know your work and will speak highly of you.

You must seek each referee's agreement before including her/his name in your resume. Be sure to contact your referees before including them in your resume, and keep them up to date with your job search activities. Give them a copy of your job application so they can support your claims to employers.

## Review your resume

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When you have written your resume, read it to a sympathetic listener to assess the following:

- Whether your skills, attributes and experiences would impress a prospective employer.
- Whether you convey a confident message about yourself, what you are good at and your personal qualities and achievements.

## Services & resources to assist

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We recommend that you attend one of our resume writing seminars. Visit CareerBoard on the Careers and Employment Service website to register.

You can have your resume checked by one of our staff at a Careers Appointment. You can book an Appointment online via the CareerBoard.

For more information visit:

Careers and Employment Service website at [www.griffith.edu.au/careers](http://www.griffith.edu.au/careers)

The resume on the following page illustrates just one of the many kinds of effective resumes. This example is not intended to be in any way prescriptive, and students should experiment with layouts and headings to decide what best suits their purposes, and the requirements of employers.

PO Box 385  
Sunnybank Plaza  
SUNNYBANK Q 4109  
(07) 3345 6789 / 0412 555 970  
kbrown@ozemail.com.au

# Kim Brown

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## CAREER GOAL

I am highly motivated to contribute to environment conservation and rehabilitation. I have a strong interest and knowledge in aquatic ecology (especially estuarine ecology), and sound analytical, research and communication skills that I would like to utilise and further develop in a graduate role within the environmental science field.

## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

20XX– 20XX

### **Bachelor of Science in Australian Environmental Studies**

Griffith University (Expected completion – November 20XX)

**Grade Point Average:** 5.1 (Scale: 1 – 7, with 7 the highest)

#### **Specialisations**

- Aquatic Ecology
- Land & Water Processes

#### **Key Subjects**

- Site Rehabilitation and Remediation
- Statistics
- Environmental Law
- Applied Community Ecology

#### **Key Projects**

- Life cycle of marine stingers in North Queensland estuarine systems
- Impact of agricultural organo-phosphates on estuarine ecology

20xx

### **Senior Certificate**

MacGregor State High School

Overall Position: 7 (Scale 1 – 25, 1 being the highest)

## OTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING

20XX (Feb – Jun)

**Certificate in Horticultural Practices**, Grovely TAFE, GROVELY Q

20XX

**Permaculture Design Course** (70 hours), Crystal Waters, CONNONVALE

20XX

**Intermediate Microsoft Office** (6 hours)

20XX

**Introduction to Corel Draw** (5 hours)

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Dec 20XX - Jan 20XX

### **Environmental Officer**

Brisbane City Council, BRISBANE Q

(8 weeks paid vacation work - December / January)

#### **Responsibilities and skills developed**

- Tested water quality in the Brisbane River
- Researched regulations regarding disposal of industrial waste in the Brisbane
- River catchment area
- Developed working knowledge of major government regulations regarding waste disposal and gained practical experience in assessing levels of contaminants in water.

Dec 20XX - Jan 20XX

### **Environmental Officer**

Environmental Protection Agency, BRISBANE Q

(8 weeks paid vacation work)

#### **Responsibilities and skills developed**

- Maintained database relating to toxic emissions entering the environment
- Conducted a catchment survey relating to polluting industries (Nth & Sth Pine Rivers
- Identified potential sources of pollution in the Bremer River and investigated complaints
- Gained conflict resolution and negotiation skills when managing complaints
- Developed practical skills in conducting Environmental Impact Assessments and scientific report writing

## Other Positions

20XX (June - Dec)

Myer, Queens Street Store (Shop Assistant, 6 months)

20XX (Xmas vac)

Fred's Corner Store, Apel Street, WISHART Q (Shop assistant, 6 weeks)

20XX (Xmas vac)

Fred's Corner Store, Apel Street, WISHART Q (Shop assistant, 4 weeks)

20XX (After school)

Sunnybank News, Moss Street, SUNNYBANK Q (Deliveries, 11 months)

## SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

- Effective written communication skills, including writing clear and concise reports (as demonstrated by gaining credits and above for all university assignments)
- Strong oral communication skills (developed through regular seminar presentations, where I maintained a distinction standard)
- Highly-developed analytical and research skills (as a result of academic studies)
- Excellent teamwork skills (gained through working on five successful team projects as part of my degree)
- Ability to communicate with people at all levels (as a result of two years of customer service, and work with the EPA and the Brisbane City Council)
- High level of competence in using statistical techniques (gained through degree and work with the EPA)

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

20XX- current                      **Student member, Environmental Institute of Australia**

## ACHIEVEMENTS

20XX                                      **Captain, MacGregor High School Debating Team** - Team gained second place in the Brisbane Secondary Schools' Competition

20XX – 20XX                              **Westpac Maths and Science Competition** - Distinction level over three years

20XX                                      **Grade 6 AMEB (flute)** - I play for pleasure and occasionally perform at concerts

## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

19XX - present                              **Member, Sunnybank Basketball Club**  
I have been active as a playing member since joining as a junior.

20XX – 20XX                              **Member, Rotaract Club, MacGregor High School Branch**  
I was a foundation member of the club in 20XX and was elected club treasurer in 20XX.

## RECREATIONAL INTERESTS

**Permaculture**  
I am enthusiastic about sustainable agriculture and am a volunteer worker at the City Farm.

**International Relations**  
I value cultural diversity and have enjoyed holiday trips to other parts of the world, an interest I intend to pursue as time and commitments allow.

## OVERSEAS TRAVEL

20XX                                      **New Zealand** – Four weeks in New Zealand as part of a Rotary Exchange Program. I spent two weeks living with a Maori family and gave talks about Australia at three Rotary Club meetings.

## REFEREES

**Dr Bill Williams**  
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