The core element of your application is your curriculum vitae (CV / résumé). It is this that will be read first. It therefore has to show who you are and what you can do. In effect, your CV represents your first work sample.

Layout and photo: first, choose a temple. Possible sources may include: MSWord templates, Latex templates or a short Internet search. If you are skilled in the use of MSWord or Adobe InDesign, design it yourself. The days of black and white CVs are over, which already provides you with an opportunity to present yourself in the best possible light. Use the layout to stand out from your competitors and be remembered in a positive way. Including a photo in your CV is no longer a standard requirement, but, particularly in this region, failing to include one will make

you stand out in a negative way. Our tip: spend money on a good job application photo - not a plain portrait. Put some time into designing the layout.

Structure: Generally speaking, a tabular CV should contain the following 5 sections:

- Personal details: Fore and surname, date and place of birth, full address, telephone number, email address, but not your marital status
- Background: Previous jobs, training, internships, part-time jobs (a clear focal point)
- Special knowledge: Advanced training, certificates, foreign languages, IT skills
- Interests: Hobbies, voluntary work, projects
- Date, Signature

CV entries must include: WHEN, WHERE; position, tasks. Use the following layout for this:

10/2017– 03/2020	Master's Degree in Life Studies at Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg, Master thesis: Topic, final grade, major focus, special project
03/2017-09/2017	Student at Mustermann AG, customer service, telesales and Accountancy support

Entries should be listed in reverse chronological order, i.e., the most recent activity, e.g., your degree, at the top. Facts, not continuous text. The final entry should be the higher education entrance qualification (Abitur, A-levels or equivalent), please refrain from including information about your primary school.

Most importantly: check the requirements for the position for which you wish to apply. What specific skills are desired? You should include the relevant buzzwords in your CV. Ensure that

each entry includes specific information about your activities and achievements, not just your status (for example, "internship" should not look like making coffee, but should show what you did and what you learned).

Our tip: Begin with an Executive Summary. Introduce yourself in three (!) short sentences. Highlight your core skills, who you are and what you want. This is the only place within the CV that should contain continuous text, and should be inserted directly after your personal data.

Special knowledge: Think carefully about the skills that are required for your desired job. A driving licence will seldom be necessary. Other knowledge could also be too much if it does not match the job description and you could give the impression of being either over qualified or qualified for a completely different job. For example, if you apply for a job in regional trade and list three foreign languages, you may make the impression that you may not stay around for very long, so simply omit these qualifications, even if it hurts to do so.

Interests: This information is not unimportant; it rounds off the overall picture of you which your CV is intended to present. Focus on your personal strengths and be sure to be very specific. Say, for example, "reading historical novels" rather than simply "reading" or "nature photography using mirror reflex technology" rather than just "photography".

Checklist:

1. Does your CV include all of your personal details?
2. Is your CV a maximum of two A4 pages long?
3. Does your CV include a current date (matching the date on the cover letter) and have you signed it?
4. Is your CV set out in a tabular, reverse chronological format?
5. Do all entries include information about your specific activities and achievements?
6. Have you included all of your academic degrees with final grades?
7. Is your CV complete with no gaps exceeding six months?
8. Have you included all buzzwords relevant to the job?
9. Is the font size 11Pt or greater?
10. Are there any spelling errors?
11. Have all graphic elements, such as bullet points, been set out in a uniform manner?