CareerSet's supports students and graduates at a rate of over 100,000 CV reviews per annum!

Leading educational institutions around the globe leverage CareerSet to reach more students with increased efficiency. Working together with career advisors, recruiters and hiring managers, we have been able to continually improve our platform capabilities. We have regularly added new CV checks, leveraged machine learning to optimise algorithms and reviewed user results to ensure accuracy of advice.

Curious about the most common CV writing mistakes and key improvements we have been able to help users with? Here are the top three:

1. **Achievement orientation**

It is essential for candidates to show relevant **achievements** on their CVs, instead of responsibilities. As natural as it may seem for someone to list duties, this only shows recruiters what they were 'supposed to do' instead of what they actually accomplished. Bluntly said, responsibilities belong on a job description, whereas achievements belong on a CV.

CareerSet analyses the structure of every line on a CV. Starting a line with a strong action verb can make all the difference in demonstrating skills and impact. A common mistake we have seen students make is understating experience by using weak action verbs such as 'supported', 'assisted' or 'worked'. Even in a supportive role with limited responsibility, it is possible to highlight ownership of accomplishments.

Then, numbers and metrics can make all the difference. Across virtually all experiences, someone will have been measured by one or more quantifiable factors. Finding out what these are is a matter of asking the right questions. For example, what were the team's goals? What did the work lead to? What was the projects size, funding or exposure?

Image: CareerSet ScoreMyCV results

2. CV Format & Presentation

Rather than cross-checking against a specific CV format - which could make every CV look the same, CareerSet allows users full flexibility when it comes to the template they are using. Nevertheless, there are some key aspects that weigh heavily on recruiters' lists and within Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) screenings.

It important to make sure that all core sections can be found. In the 100,000+ CVs we scanned this year, we saw an incredibly wide range of core section names that candidates used. Creative as some may be, it is safest to stick to the proven headings such as 'Work Experience', 'Projects' and 'Education' - in a text-based format. ATS software may not be able to read headings that deviate too much from the norm or word art.

Other format related improvements that we have most frequently flagged include CV length (where the record was set at eight pages by a recent graduate), date order, spelling and filler words. Attention to detail is important too. A CV gives an employer an indication of the quality of the work they can expect a candidate to deliver in a future role. Whilst CareerSet covers the entire presentation of a CV, including consistency and punctuation, we regularly point out avoidable errors.

Small details like punctuation can make all the difference indeed – especially to that well-meaning student who inadvertently missed a comma and listed 'cooking dogs' to their list of interests!

Image: CareerSet consistency check

3. Relevance

In today's world, it is of crucial importance to address the specific needs of an employer. Whilst it may have been satisfactory in the past to optimise one general CV and submit it to multiple vacancies, nowadays this practice drastically reduces a candidate's chances.

There are two main reasons why it is important to target a CV to a specific job description. Firstly, competition has intensified in recent years and there has been so-called academic inflation. Whilst a degree on its own may have been sufficient to pass a CV screening in the past, recruiters will nowadays look for narrower skillsets to filter through a large amount of (international) a with similar degrees. Listing exact skills that match those required for the role is essential.

Secondly, recruiters may use Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to rank candidates based on relevancy to the role. A low match score means that a CV could go under the radar entirely. If no ATS is in place, this process still happens manually. Research shows that recruiters only spend an average of seven seconds looking a candidate's CV before deciding whether to discard it – so relevancy is key!

CareerSet enables users to upload a job description in order to conduct a skills-gap analysis with their CV and find out their relevancy score. On average, we have been able to increase the relevancy score of users with over 25% by listing exactly which key skills were found versus which ones were missing. In almost every CV reviews, we could point users at one or more skills they did possess but hadn't included on their CV.
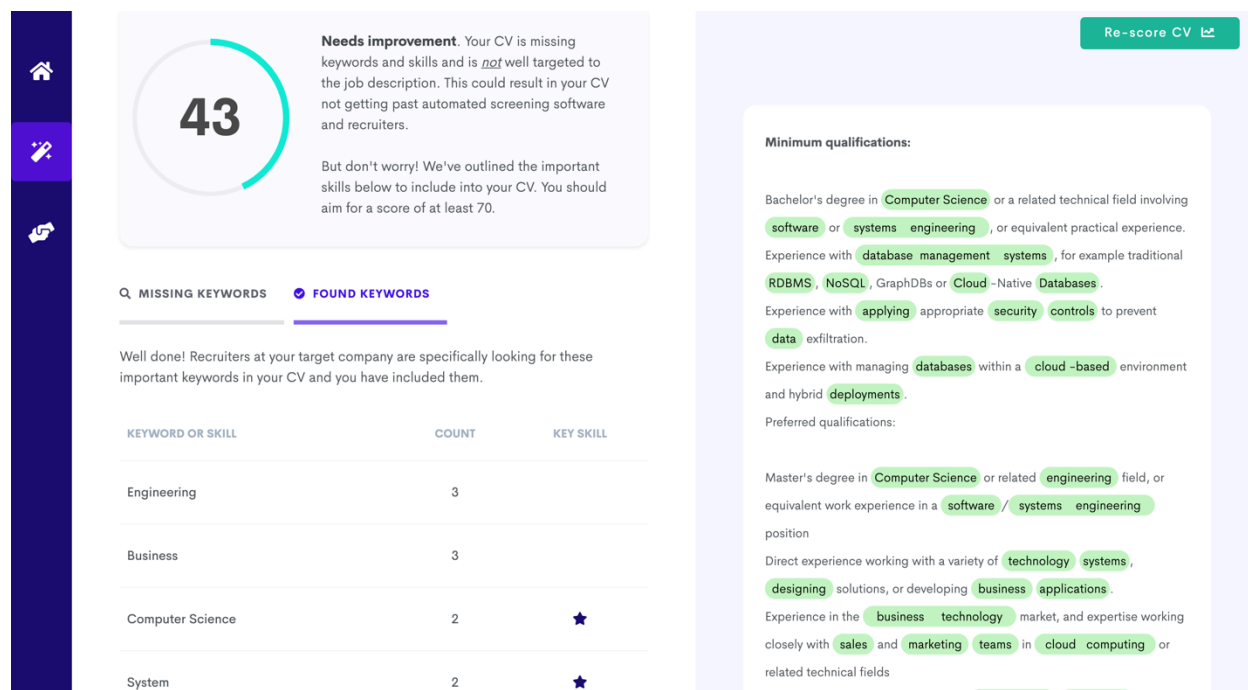

Image: TargetMyCV results

Institution-use

On average, our partner institutions see 10-25% of their student body use CareerSet to improve and target their CVs every academic year.

Many students are served by the CareerSet platform as a standalone solution, without the need of visiting a Career Advisor. They improve their CVs at their own convenience, target it to the job they wish to apply to, and submit their application.

Follow-up CV sessions can now be allocated to those students that really need the extra guidance. To do so, a threshold CV score can be set, which needs to be obtained before they can book a personal session.

The Career Advisors we work with have commented on significantly improved sessions with students. Through the higher overall CV quality, plus the CareerSet insights into specific student needs, they were able to further shift their focus from explaining CV writing fundamentals to personal guidance.

Curious to try CareerSet for yourself? Request a free trial today and find out what impact the platform can have at your institution.