

## **If you have a gap in your career history**

### **Sample covering letter**

14 Broadway  
Bromsgrove  
Worcestershire  
B34 8YY

15 January 2013

Mrs D Wagstaffe  
Head Teacher  
Princess Mary High School  
Bromsgrove  
B46 6VU

Dear Mrs Wagstaffe

I am writing to inquire about the availability of work experience at your school in the near future.

I am due to complete my BSc (Hons) in Science with the Open University this year and I am looking to gain some school-based experience by undertaking a short work placement of one or two weeks during the summer term. In my degree I have taken modules in biology and chemistry, and I would like to train as a science teacher.

I completed a placement in the science department of a local school last year, which I found very useful. However, before applying for a PGCE I want to gain further experience in another school so that I am fully prepared for a career in teaching.

In my previous placement I was involved in observing classes, preparing lessons and assisting teachers in year groups 7-10. This was excellent experience, and I feel that a placement with your school would provide me with a valuable alternative experience with which to compare this.

The experience I have gained in my current employment has also equipped me with some relevant skills which will be useful to me in a teaching career. I am working in a residential care home for young people, where I am one of a team responsible for maintaining the welfare of a number of 13–18 year-olds. This work calls for good interpersonal and communication skills as well as the need for empathy and discretion – all skills which I expect to be useful in a classroom.

You will see that I have some gaps in my work history on my CV. During these periods of time I was looking after my own children, and my elderly parents for whom I had caring responsibilities.

I have enclosed my CV which I hope will be of interest to you. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future if you feel you are able to offer me a placement in the summer term.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Parkes

## Sample skills-based CV

# Susan Parkes

14 Broadway, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B34 8YY

Tel: 07654 929765

Email: s.parkes@nomail.co.uk

## Personal Profile

I am a well-organised, conscientious individual with over ten years' experience in working with and caring for children and elderly people. I have taken the opportunity to study for a science degree with the Open University while working in a range of caring roles or looking after my own children and elderly parents.

I am now looking for suitable work experience in a secondary school as I am planning to apply for a secondary PGCE in science next year.

## Key skills

### Effective communication

- I support children who have a range of physical, emotional and learning needs. My counselling role calls for effective listening and communication skills, an ability to gain the trust of young people and deal sensitively but assertively with their demands.
- I have produced written reports and essays as part of my academic training and my professional activities.

### Time management and organisation

- I have needed good time management skills to balance my Open University studies with my professional commitments and my caring responsibilities at home.
- In my work experience placement at a secondary school, I planned, prepared and successfully delivered part of a lesson for a Year 7 class.

### Team working

- My role as a support officer has involved working with a range of agencies as well as parents and carers, to deliver an excellent service of care and learning support.
- My school placements involved working closely with teachers, support staff, pupils and their families to encourage active learning.

## Qualifications

2006-2012	<b>BSc (Honours) Natural Sciences</b> Modules included: Exploring Science, Investigative & Mathematical Skills in Science, Analytical Science, Cell Biology, Practical Science, Chemistry and Analysis.	<b><i>The Open University</i></b>
1990-1992	<b>BTEC National Diploma in Caring (Merit)</b>	<b><i>Kidderminster College</i></b>
1990	<b>Five GCSE passes at grades A-C</b> Subjects: English Language, Mathematics, Double Science and Information Technology	<b><i>Bromsgrove High School</i></b>

### Note

Keep the title of your CV simple; there's no need to use the words 'Curriculum Vitae'.

Place contact details at centre of the page to improve layout.

### Note

Explain any gaps in your career history in a positive way.

### Note

Highlight the key transferable skills you've gained through your professional and academic activities. This can be useful if you wish to move into a new career area.

### Note

Provide some detail about the subjects covered by your degree.

## Work Experience

2008-Present

Support Officer

*Springfield Residential Care Home, Bromsgrove*

Working with children in care who have learning or physical disabilities, mental health problems and other emotional or social needs. My contribution to providing a high level of service has been recognised by a Quality Service Award from my employers on three occasions.

### Duties

- Monitoring and reporting on each resident's needs and progress
- Providing physical care, learning and behavioural support
- Providing one-to-one counselling sessions
- Teaching daily living skills such as budgeting and shopping

2011

Work experience placements

*St Josephs High School, Bromsgrove*

### Duties

- Observing science lessons with pupils in year groups 7–10
- Assisting teachers, and supporting pupils on a one-to-one basis
- Planning, preparing and delivering part of a lesson to a Year 7 class
- Attending departmental meetings and discussing curriculum with staff

1992-1998

Care Assistant

*North Bank Residential Home, Bromsgrove*

Responsible for maintaining a high standard of care provision. Provided support and care to elderly residents to help them achieve maximum quality of life.

### Duties

- Offering personal care, emotional and practical support to residents
- Administering medication and arranging medical appointments
- Taking part in staff and service users' meetings and also in training activities
- Updating residents' medical records and other paperwork

## Additional information

- I have a current CRB check.
- I have an up-to-date first-aid certificate.
- I have a full, clean driving licence.

## References

Available on request

### Note

Main duties can be very brief here, because key skills have already been highlighted.

Include key activities and responsibilities. Where possible, identify how your specific contribution made a difference or added value.

### Note

Your first choice for a referee might be your current employer (or a past employer if you're not working at the moment).

A second option could be your OU tutor or someone in a position of responsibility who can provide a character reference.