Public Sector Resourcing
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How to Write an Effective CV for a Permanent UK Government Role

This guide is designed for candidates applying for permanent roles within the UK Government or Civil Service. It explains what hiring panels look for and how to present your experience clearly and effectively.

Understand How Your CV Is Assessed

Most UK Government roles use the Success Profiles framework.

Your CV is assessed on evidence of experience and how well it aligns to the role requirements.

Always read the job advert carefully and tailor your CV accordingly.

Show Public Service Impact

Government roles value fairness, accountability, value for money, and service to the public. Where possible, explain how your work improved services, supported users, managed risk, or ensured compliance.

Focus on Achievements, Not Job Descriptions

Avoid listing tasks or responsibilities. Instead, explain what you achieved, how you did it, and the impact. A simple structure is:

- **Situation** – what was happening
- **Action** – what you did
- **Result** – what changed or improved

Use Clear Evidence and Numbers

Strong CVs include measurable outcomes such as:

- Time or cost savings
- Size of budgets or teams managed
- Volumes of work delivered
- Improvements in performance or quality

Keep Language Clear and Accessible

Write in plain English. Avoid jargon, acronyms, or corporate buzzwords.

Assume the person reading your CV may not be a technical expert.

Over-relying on AI tools:
AI can help with wording and structure but copying AI-generated text without editing can make your CV sound generic or mismatched to your experience. Use AI for inspiration only, always personalise, fact-check, and rewrite in your own voice to ensure authenticity.

CV Length and Layout

A 2–4 page CV is acceptable for government roles. Use clear headings and bullet points.

Include:

- A short profile
- Key skills aligned to the role
- Employment history (most recent first)
- Qualifications or professional memberships

Write at the Right Level

Make sure your examples reflect the seniority of the role you are applying for. Senior roles should show leadership, decision-making, and influencing. More junior roles should focus on delivery, analysis, and teamwork.

Explain Why You Want a Permanent Role

Panels value candidates who are motivated by long-term delivery and public service. You can show this in a short profile at the top of your CV.

Remember the CV Supports Your Application

If the application includes a personal statement or behaviour questions, this is where most marks are awarded. Your CV should support and reinforce that evidence.

Final Checks Before You Submit

- Check spelling and grammar
- Ensure dates and job titles are clear
- Remove photos and personal details such as age or marital status
- Make sure your CV matches the job advert

These resources are not official UK Government or Civil Service documents. They are practical tips and guidance developed by the PSR team.