

GRADUATE RESUMES

Law

Your success in gaining an interview for a graduate position or progressing further in the application process, hinges upon the quality of the written application you provide to an employer.

This is your opportunity to demonstrate that you possess the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities for the position.

Tailor your resume

Your resume is a marketing tool. It is **essential** that you **tailor your resume for every job application** to increase the fit between you, the role and the organisation.

Thoroughly research the organisation and the position to determine what the employer is looking for.

You **must** follow the application instructions to ensure your application progresses to the next stage.

Reflect on your past study and work experiences, extracting points that could help to sell yourself to an employer.

Emphasise your strengths as they relate to each particular role and match your skills and abilities to the job you are applying for.

Headings

There are no set headings for a resume, although the following headings are commonly included. Decide what headings best promote you to a prospective employer's expectations.

Under each heading, list experiences in reverse chronological order, most recent first.

PERSONAL DETAILS

- Name, city, phone and email.
- LinkedIn Profile – ensure your profile is up to date. Consider personalising your URL (search **Customise your URL** on LinkedIn).
- Date of birth, marital/parental status and health information and full address are **not required**.

CAREER STATEMENT or PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY (Optional, 2-3 lines)

This section should only be added to your resume if it has been written to suit the position and organisation you are applying to. This is your opportunity to market your key selling points plus state why you want the job.

EDUCATION

Tertiary and high school (only list high school if you are a recent school leaver and have relevant achievements to list) and other relevant training qualifications. Begin with your **Bachelor of Laws**.

MEMBERSHIPS

Include memberships of professional bodies or industry bodies.

WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING (WIL)

Undertaking a WIL subject is a great way to gain practical experience in your field. Make the most of this when preparing your resume. Consider how you can describe your responsibilities, achievements, contributions, range of duties and situations (small business, not-for-profit, government department, etc.). What skills did you learn? What projects did you contribute to?

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Begin with the most recent. Use bullet points to list your responsibilities and achievements for each role and tailor these to the position. Do not leave large gaps in your resume. If you had a career break, list this for transparency.

REFEREES

Supervisor/Manager/Academic. (Usually 2 to 3 people). Avoid personal referees. Obtain permission first.

Optional Headings

Professional Development	Key Skills
Extra-Curricular Activities	Publications
Special Awards	Volunteering
Community Involvement	Research Projects

Language

Use professional vocabulary, e.g. 'negotiated', rather than 'worked out'. Use verbs to describe your skills and employment achievements. See the ['Action Verb' Information Sheet](#) for more examples.

Top Tips

- Thoroughly research the organisation's application procedure to determine what is required.
- Tailor your resume to the job description/organisation requirements of the position.
- Emphasise achievements to demonstrate your capacity.
- Be clear, concise and truthful.
- Check page requirements if identified by the employer.
- Use a simple, professional layout with consistent formatting.
- Use bullet points to list your relevant experience and employment history and associated responsibilities and achievements.
- Check and check again for spelling and grammatical errors.
- Check if **Applicant Tracking System (ATS)** software is being used to short list resumes and modify layout if so. Online screening software may not read photos, clipart, tables, fancy fonts, borders.

See our information sheet on Applicant Tracking Software – [Can a robot read your resume?](#) to ensure your resume will get through any online screening tools.

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LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/johnwtaylor](https://www.linkedin.com/in/johnwtaylor)

Tip – Use a professional email address such as your JCU email and personalise/embed your LinkedIn URL.

CAREER STATEMENT or PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY (optional):

I am a motivated final year Law student with 12 months experience volunteering in a not-for-profit organization supporting homeless youth. I am ready to use my education and skills in a professional XXXXXX role.

EDUCATION

2022 - present

Bachelor of Laws

James Cook University, Cairns, QLD

Expected completion date November 2024

Relevant Achievements

- GPA: 5.7 (scale 1-7, 7 being highest)
- Member of the winning team in the 3rd year Moot Court Assessment / Competition
- Organised inter-disciplinary professional development opportunities for Law and Business students

Relevant Subjects

- Company and Partnership Law – High Distinction
- Laws of Trust – High Distinction

2021

Diploma of Business

Far North Queensland TAFE, Cairns, QLD

2020

Year 12 Senior Certificate

Smithfield State High School, QLD

Achievements

- Social Justice Captain, active member of the Student Representative Council
- Academic Achievement Award – Year 12 Legal Studies

LEGAL PLACEMENT

2024

WGC Lawyers, Cairns, February – April (total 100 hours)

- Successfully completed professional experience with a large legal practice
- Participated in client consultations with the Senior Associate, Family Law
- Researched family law matters and presented in short report format
- Participated in mock examinations of witnesses prior to court hearings

Supervisor's Comment (**OPTIONAL**)

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Tip – If you decide to add a **Career Statement or Professional Summary**,

- Keep it short, keep it targeted.
- What value can you bring to the employer?
- Make sure it matches the role you are applying for.

Tip - Only include relevant information. Think about highlights from your course, subjects, assignments, projects that make you stand out. Keep it targeted.

Tip - Include if recent school leaver, list major school awards, prizes, leadership position, extra-curricular activities.

Tip – Your legal experience is a major selling point. How did you contribute to the organisation? What skills did you use/improve/gain? Did you receive positive feedback?

Tip – List relevant conferences, courses, workshops attended. List course provider, title and date attended.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2024** Completed online course – Negotiation Skills, LinkedIn Learning
- 2023** Participated in Far North Queensland Law Association Mentor Program for two semesters
- 2022** Attended Queensland Law Society webinar series on Queensland Family Law

KEY SKILLS

- Communication** Highly developed communication skills gained through training and work with the Court Network and Cairns Community Legal Centre
- Teamwork** Strong ability to work as part of a team evidenced through academic achievements and team leader role at The Coffee Club
- Organisational** Outstanding ability to organise and prioritise workload as demonstrated while completing study in conjunction with legal placement and volunteer commitment
- Problem Solving** Fine-tuned analytical and evaluative skills gained through ongoing membership to the JCU Debating Society and experience with mock examinations of witnesses

Tips

- The skills listed above are examples only. Think about your own skills i.e, critical reasoning, leadership.
- Research is **crucial** – you need to identify the skills the employer/position requires and address these.
- All JCU students can improve their skills with free access to [LinkedIn Learning](#) – check it out on the JCU Library website.

PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT

- 2024 – present** Treasurer of JCU Inter Alia
- 2023 – present** Member of FNQ Law Association
- 2022 – present** Member of JCU Inter Alia
- 2022 – present** Regular attendee at local CPD events

Tip – Allow more space for recent, relevant information and provide less detail as your information becomes less recent/relevant.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- 2022 – 2023** **Cairns Community Legal Centre** (Volunteer)
- Undertook one evening shift per week
 - Provided guidance and assistance to homeless youth on ways to find relevant information on legal issues
- Feb – Nov 2022** **Court Network, Cairns** (Volunteer)
- Successfully completed training program
 - Attended Cairns District Court on a fortnightly basis to provide support and information to individuals, friends and families attending court
- 2023** **Student Mentor, James Cook University** (Volunteer)
- Supported first year Law students settle in and succeed in their transition into university
 - Trained in communication, mentoring and advocacy
 - Member of an award winning team – Vice Chancellors Award

Tip – Don't underestimate volunteering. Employers value community service as it demonstrates local connection.

Tips

- Focus on highlighting achievements, responsibilities and transferable skills developed that are relevant to **the position and the employer** and which indicate your capacity as a future employee
- Don't underestimate the value of **non-degree related** employment. You will have gained valuable skills – the key is to explain how these skills can be transferred to the role you are applying for.
- Commence each description with an **action word** (verb)
- **Don't** just list the duties from your Position Description
- Make a **clear connection** to the job you are applying for
- Identify **complexity** and **achievements** in each statement

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

2022 – 2024

Team Leader

The Coffee Club, Smithfield, QLD

- Coordinated and supervised a team of seven part-time, junior staff
- Recruited and trained junior staff
- Responded and sensitively handled complaints and feedback from customers
- Ensured high levels of customer service and hygiene throughout the restaurant

Jan – Dec 2021

Retail Assistant

Myer, Cairns, QLD

- Provided excellent customer service
- Responsible for stock control and display
- Cash register operation
- Awarded Employee of the Month in July 2021

Tip – Optional heading. List interests that relate to your work life and give an indication of your personal qualities or abilities e.g. leadership, resilience, teamwork.

INTERESTS

- Member of Cairns Heat soccer club
- Coach for the 'under 12s' soccer team
- Debating – member of the JCU Debating Society
- Keen traveler – backpacked through Europe

Tip – Keep your referees informed – they need to know what you are applying for so that they are prepared when an employer contacts them to find out more about you.

REFEREES

Mr XXXXXXXX
Partner – Family Law
WGC Lawyers
Phone: 07 XXXX XXXX
Email: XXXXX

Ms XXXXXXXX
President
FNQ Law Association
Phone: 07 XXXX XXXX
Email: XXXXX

**DO NOT COPY – PLEASE USE
THIS EXAMPLE TO GENERATE
YOUR OWN IDEAS**

Need more help? Go to www.jcu.edu.au/careers for more resources

- **Information Sheets:** Action Verb List, Can a robot read your Resume?
- **Employability Edge:** Master Written Applications module
- **Big Interview:** combine training and practice to improve your interview techniques
- Make an **appointment** with the Careers and Employability Team to discuss your job search

NOTE: This information is intended to be used as a guide and to provide general information only. It is solely your responsibility to evaluate and check the accuracy of the information provided.