



Queen's
UNIVERSITY

STUDENT AFFAIRS
Career Services



QUEEN'S BEST

**Resume - Cover Letter - Interviews
Highlights**



Gordon Hall

74 Union Street

Office of the University Registrar

Career Services

Office of the Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs

School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs

Acknowledgments

Queen's University is situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Territory.

Students and Alumni

We would like to thank all the students and alumni who generously shared their applications to be used as examples in this guide.

Editors and Designers

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Sponsors

A heartfelt thanks to the employer and educator advertisers whose support helps make this publication available to Queen's students.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Whether you are applying for a part-time job, an internship, a volunteer opportunity, or your first role after graduating, the resources in this guide will help you communicate your skills and experiences. We have compiled examples from Queen's students to help you write your best application and prepare for an interview!

How to use this guide

In this guide you will find ideas and strategies for writing resumes and cover letters and preparing for interviews. Each section includes examples to help you understand how you can best communicate your knowledge, skills, experience, and attributes. Each example is labeled with the strategies or approach the student has used to communicate their strengths and relevant experience.

For easy scanning, the resume and cover letter examples are tagged with icons that indicate the student's experience. These tags can help you see how students with similar experiences to you describe them. Consider also looking at examples that don't match your experience; you might find a valuable strategy that you can use.

We have compiled these examples for your review. As you read this guide and prepare your application or prepare for an interview, use your judgment to decide how to best tell your unique story of your skills and experience.

For more information on writing applications, preparing for interviews, conducting a job search, or exploring your career options, visit us at Career Services!

Icons Legend:

 First year	 2nd or 3rd Year	 Graduating Year	 Graduate Student	 Skills From Academics	 Previous Employment
 Work or Study Abroad	 QUIP	 Entrepreneur	 Athletics	 Technical Skills	 Extracurriculars

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THE PURPOSE OF A RESUME

A resume is a written document that demonstrates the connection between your knowledge, experience, skills, and attributes and the position you are applying to. It highlights your relevant experience, shows why you will be successful in the role, and gives evidence of what you can contribute. Taking the time to customize your resume for each application to show how your experience relates to a specific role can increase the likelihood of getting an interview.

Key Differences Between Resume and Curriculum Vitae

The terms resume and CV are often used interchangeably, but there is a difference. In Canada, resumes are used to apply for work-related positions (e.g. jobs, volunteer roles, internships). CV's are usually used to apply for academic or research-related roles. If you are not sure what type of document is being asked for, look at the position description and/or reach out to the organization for clarification.



WRITING GREAT RESUMES: KEY IDEAS

- 1 **Use the role description** or position posting as a reference to guide what skills, experience, knowledge, and attributes you highlight on your resume.
- 2 **Use keywords and phrases** from the role description to show you have the experience and qualifications they are seeking and that you have read the description carefully.
- 3 **Describe your skills and experience concisely.** People may review your resume quickly, so it's important to present your information concisely.
- 4 **Demonstrate your experience** by describing your role and/or responsibilities, the skills you used and/or learned, and the outcome of your involvement.
- 5 **Begin** each description of your skills and experience with an action word.
- 6 **Avoid using resume templates.** Templates often cause formatting headaches and can limit your ability to customize your resume to best suit your experience and purpose. Also, templates are often incompatible with Applicant Tracking Software and can prevent your resume from being screened.
- 7 **Proofread your resume.** It is a good idea to have others proofread your resume to provide feedback and to check your spelling and grammar.
- 8 **Avoid abbreviations and acronyms.**
- 9 **Your cover letter should come first,** followed by your resume, if you are submitting your cover letter and resume together as a file.
- 10 **Consider the file name you will use for your document(s).** Using your name and the role number as the file name is a safe choice (e.g. RSterling_Role12345_CoverLetter.pdf). Some postings might specify the naming structure for your files.

For more information on writing your resume, sign up for the Career Prep Module!



RESUME BASICS

Firstname M. Lastname

netID@queensu.ca | Phone

INTRODUCTION: PROFILE, OBJECTIVE, OR SUMMARY OF SKILLS

- Tailor your introduction to best suit the context of the role you are applying to based on your skills and experience
- For more information on when to use which introduction and examples, check out the Resume Module in the Career Services course.

EDUCATION

Bachelor's in Degree and Program Name

Queen's University, Kingston, ON

Expected YYYY

Relevant Courses: _____, _____, _____

Exchange: Name of University, Country, Term and Year

Other Education (e.g. Certificate, Diploma, or High School), Location

Month YYYY

Relevant Courses: _____, _____, _____

Awards: _____, _____, _____

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Title or Role, Organization, Location

Month YYYY - Present

- List the most recent or current experience first
- Include formal and informal jobs, volunteer work, and internships
- Use bullet points, beginning each point with an action verb
- Use quantitative and qualitative terms and demonstrate the end result of your efforts
- Quantify your points with information such as number of people involved or time spent on a project

Title or Role, Organization, Location

Month YYYY - Month YYYY

- Use past tense action verbs for experiences that have ended
- Describe the scope or pace of the work and your level of responsibility
- Describe how you contributed, what you accomplished, and the results of your efforts

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Title or Role, Organization, Location

Month YYYY - Present

- Include athletic, academic, performance, professional, or social activities

INTERESTS

You can include a few interests that will help you stand out in your application; this can be anything from baking to marathons or photography. This is an opportunity to show your personality and perseverance, especially if these interests showcase skills and talents not otherwise evident on your resume.



Key Considerations When Formatting Your Resume:

- Format your resume consistently. A clear information hierarchy will make your resume easy to scan for key information.
- The font you choose should be clear and legible. Times New Roman, Calibri, Open Sans and Helvetica are safe choices.
- While you will likely use different font sizes in your resume, avoid anything smaller than 11 point font.



Graduating
Year



Work or Study
Abroad

LISA LEUNG

123-456-7890
myemail@queensu.ca

OBJECTIVE

Graduating multilingual commerce student specialized in accounting. Seeking to leverage my education and international experience in corporate and government environments to grow in a challenging position with a multinational financial firm.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Commerce, Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2019-Present**

- Specializing in Accounting with a cumulative 3.85 GPA
- Queen's University Principal's Scholarship, D.I. McLeod Dean's List Scholarship
- Exchange to Crestiqua University, Spain (Fall/Winter 2022-2023)

BUSINESS-RELATED EXPERIENCE

Pensions & Insurance Plans Assistant, Department of Foreign Affairs, Ottawa, ON **2022**

- Performed nearly 600 audits on the salary data of Canada's locally engaged staff (LES) around the world
- Identified underpayments and overpayments to ensure the accuracy of individual pension plan calculations
- Verified existing documentation of countries' social security programs against updated funding estimates and online resources to produce a revised appendix for the 2021-2022 Annual Report
- Experimented with Excel functions and formulas to efficiently digitalize decades worth of LES salary scale data, making the records more practical and accessible for future use

Summer Intern, Bank of China, Shanghai, China **2021**

- Persuaded 85% of small business owner clients to further engage with the Bank of China over other alternatives
- Transcended foreign language and cultural barriers to establish strong customer relationships
- Collaborated with an Account Manager in conducting out-of-house negotiations with clients, providing personal input as requested and exercising cross-cultural business sensitivity

RELEVANT EXTRACURRICULAR EXPERIENCE

Canuck, Exchange and Transfer Committee, Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2021-2022**

- Facilitated the transition and integration of 36 international exchange students into Canadian university life
- Counseled and hosted events for exchange students throughout the academic year to showcase Canadian culture and positively shape their Queen's experience

Math Tutor, Commerce Kids, Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2020-2021**

- Tutored members of a third grade math class at an elementary school to help students overcome academic challenges, and facilitate learning and personal growth

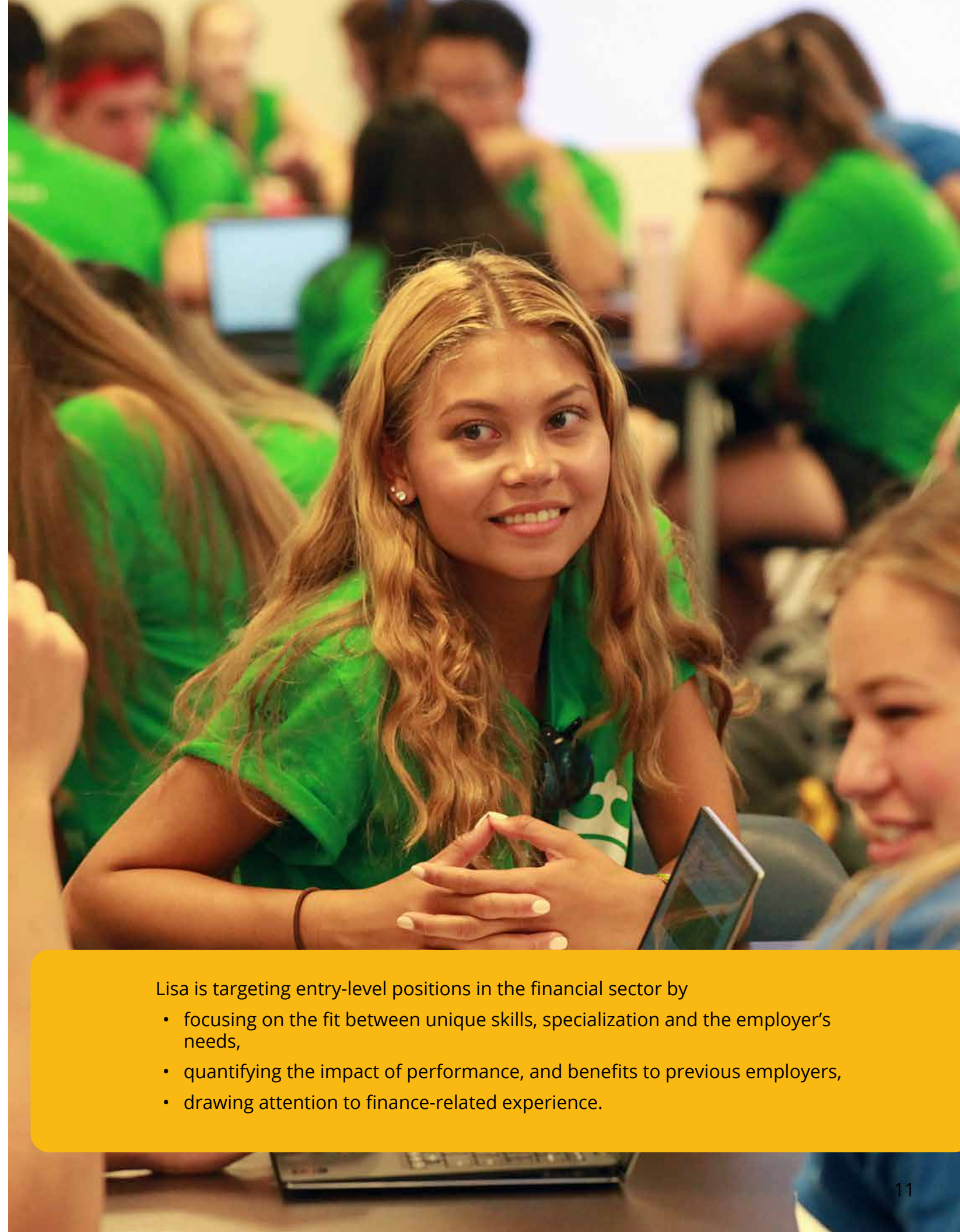
ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Client Service Assistant, Queen's Career Services, Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2020-Present**

- Gained experience prioritizing and addressing diverse inquiries from client, including students and employers

LANGUAGES

- Fluent in English
- Intermediate abilities in French
- B1 level diploma for proficiency in French: DELF (Diplôme d'études en langue française)
- Working proficiency in Mandarin (Chinese)



Lisa is targeting entry-level positions in the financial sector by

- focusing on the fit between unique skills, specialization and the employer's needs,
- quantifying the impact of performance, and benefits to previous employers,
- drawing attention to finance-related experience.



Graduating
Year



Skills From
Academics



Technical
Skills

Jesse Sparks

613-555-5555
myemail@queensu.ca

EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE

Aiming to utilize three years of successful training and experience in clinical cancer research-trials to obtain a position that contributes to high-impact cancer research.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science (Honours) -- Life Sciences, Queen's University 2023
2020 - 2021 – Queen's University Dean's List

Successfully completed a range of courses in biological and physical science, including:

- **Histology:** Discussed the various body systems at the histological level. Learned to distinguish between natural and disease processes as well as the various components making up body tissues.
- **Human Anatomy:** Learned the clinical relevance of all major human body systems through coursework and practical, hands-on laboratory teachings.
- **Pathology:** Learned about the reactions and adaptations of cells, organs and tissue to injury. Reviewed major biochemical processes such as the development of cancer, inflammation, coagulation and the immune response.
- **Epidemiology:** Developed skills to design, analyze, and interpret descriptive and analytical epidemiological studies. Examined core epidemiological principles and study designs.
- **Pharmacology and Toxicology:** Included topics such as the actions of drugs and toxins at the cellular, organ and organism level, and the uses and toxicities of drugs on various body systems in both humans and animals.
- **Health Studies:** Discussed the social and physical determinants of health as well as factors that contribute positively and negatively to health. Studied chronic diseases such as cancer and diabetes, and learned about the factors that cause them.

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Research Associate

Canadian Cancer Trials Group, Kingston, Ontario June 2023 - Present
Reviewed data, issued data queries, data cleaning, and communicating with sites on various cancer prevention and treatment trials in paper and EDC format.

Clinical Trials/Tumour Bank Assistant

Canadian Cancer Trials Group, Kingston, Ontario Sept 2022 – June 2023
Worked in both the clinical trials group and tumour bank performing a variety of tasks including data verification, inventory, sample tracking and shipping, and aliquoting. Research contributed to 2 articles published in peer reviewed publications.

Tumour Bank Assistant

Canadian Cancer Trials Group, Kingston, Ontario May 2022 – August 2022
Assisted with a variety of tasks including slide scanning, data entry, creation of fluid collection kits, and slide cutting. Gained a thorough knowledge of the tumour banking database and its use in the proper and precise tracking of samples.

Student Researcher

Canadian Cancer Trials Group, Kingston, Ontario Sept 2021 – April 2022
Responsible for data and consent verification on various cancer clinical trials. In the process learned about how clinical trials are properly conducted.

NSERC-USRA Summer Researchship

Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario May 2021 – August 2022
Developed and implemented a research project about ovarian cancer. In the process learned and developed a variety of lab techniques including PCR, tissue culture, electrophoresis and flow cytometry

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Musician

Ottawa / Kingston, Ontario 2015 - Present
Entertain at local and international events, including the Glengarry Highland Games, Rural Expo, various fairs, and senior's homes.

MacCulloch Dancers

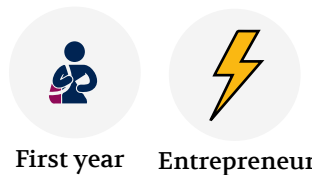
Ottawa, Ontario 2015 - 2020
Entertained at local and international events, including the Glengarry Highland Games, The National Arts Centre, the Nokia Brier, the Canadian Tulip Festival, with the Governor General's Foot Guards and at International Folk Festivals in Charleroi, Belgium, and Springville, Utah.

Rob Roy Pipe Band

Kingston, Ontario 2011 - Present
Entertain at various events including the Fort Henry Sunset Ceremonies, Potsdam Diversity Festival, Canada Day, Christmas, and St. Patrick's Day parades.

Jesse is targeting employment in the field of cancer research by

- highlighting relevant employment experience,
- establishing a breadth and depth of knowledge gained through courses,
- identifying specific tasks and techniques performed in related positions.



Sameer Ali
 myemail@queensu.ca
 (613) 555-5555

SUMMARY OF SKILLS

- Enthusiastic and charismatic first year student with a passion for educating and entertaining
- Experienced tour guide and group leader
- Current Concurrent Education student, Queen's University
- Ability to supervise and manage groups of up to 25 people
- Experience educating people of all ages and academic ranges
- First Aid – CPR Certified and High-Five Certified

TOUR GUIDE EXPERIENCE

Fall Open House Preview November 2022
 Faculty of Education, Queen's University, Kingston, ON

- Acted as guide to prospective Queen's concurrent education students
- Answered questions related to Queen's concurrent education program
- Gave general information on programs and campus life

Tour Guide – Museum Actor & Educator Summer 2022
 Pickering Village Museum, Pickering, ON

- Acted as a role-playing tour guide for the dramatization of colonial village life
- Led groups up to 16 people on tours of a heritage site
- Demonstrated period activities including traditional games and candle making, and helped children with traditional crafts
- Provided information about historical buildings and customs, ensuring accuracy, and researching information when visitors had questions
- Received positive feedback from my supervisor and from parents about going beyond expectations in working with children

ADDITIONAL LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Tutor January 2023 – Present
 Private Contracts, Kingston, ON

- Provide weekly individual tutoring to seven students to review concepts from class
- Explain class material considering multiple methods of learning
- Help students work through practice problems, leading to increased understanding and higher academic results
- Developed a website and social media graphics to promote my business

Conductor February 2019 – June 2020
 St. Mary Catholic Secondary School, Pickering, ON

- Led weekly orchestra practices after school
- Taught and conducted a selection of music with a band of 14 students
- Managed preparations for concert including programming, marketing, booking and seating
- Performed in three public concerts

Gymnastics Coach 2018 – Present
 Pickering Athletics Centre & Planet Gymnastics, Pickering, ON

- Instruct recreational classes, birthday parties and summer camps of groups up to 25 participants
- Prepare and deliver weekly lesson plans
- Monitor and evaluate student progress
- Plan fun and entertaining activities (including crafts) for summer camp
- Teach new skills through a variety of activities and progressions

Music Teacher September 2014 – August 2016
 Private Contracts, Pickering, ON

- Taught students new skills with attention to learning style
- Provided feedback on progress and motivation for improvement
- Prepared and customized weekly lesson plans to meet the needs of diverse clientele
- Created business and secured a large client network by using effective promotional material and networking (clients ranged in age from six to twenty)

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Music / Bachelor of Education September 2022 – Present
 Queen's University, Kingston, ON

High School Diploma June 2022
 St. Mary Catholic Secondary School, Pickering, ON
 Graduating Average: 95.2%: Honour Roll

Awards and Certificates

- Cardinal Carter Award June 2023
- Visual and Performing Arts June 2023
- Ontario Scholar June 2022
- English Award of Excellence June 2022
- St. Mary Value Award June 2022
- Highest Overall Average November 2019, 2020, 2021

Sameer is targeting part-time employment as a tour guide by

- highlighting relevant experience in tour guide and leadership sections,
- opening with a summary of skills that matches skills and experiences described in the job description,
- including awards and certificates to demonstrate exceptional achievement.



Linnea Spencer
 myemail@queensu.ca
 613-555-5555

OBJECTIVE

Creative and flexible third year computer engineering student specialized in Java and C languages with a strong foundation in robotics. Seeking to utilize project management, teamwork, and communication skills in a 12-month internship with a progressive tech start up.

EDUCATION

- Computer Engineering, Queen's University** 2021 – Present
 - GPA (in most recently completed academic year): 4.00
 - Queen's University Dean's Scholar 2023
 - Queen's University Excellence Scholarship, 2021
 - Related Courses: Algorithms, Java, Data Structures, Computer Architecture, Digital Systems, Electronics

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Java: familiar with object oriented concepts: encapsulation, object hierarchies, inheritance

- Programmed an animated firework GUI with encapsulation that used the runge-kutta method to mathematically predict the firework's position

C: ability to code various data structures: trees, linked lists and scatter tables, I/O programming

- Created program using recursion that calculated the internal and external path length of a tree as well as the number of nodes in the tree using a divide and conquer algorithm that led to improving accuracy of predictions by 50% over previous models.

Assembly Language (RISC): comfortable with assembly language concepts and coding

- Programmed FPGA's interrupt service routine to accept and transmit data via parallel output and input ports and analyzed the resulting timing diagram

Arduino: proficient in the programming and circuiting aspects of Arduino

- Programmed and circuited an autonomous robot to play a version of basketball in a skills competition placing 2nd in a group of 30 students.

Other known languages: working knowledge of: Robot C, VHDL, MATLAB, Turing

- Current courses (to be completed in May): C++, Verilog, Haskell, Prolog
- Independent study: HTML, CSS, Objective C

Hardware: working knowledge of circuits, signals, sensors and actuators

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Personal Web and App Development Projects

- Currently working on teaching myself HTML and CSS for web development as well as objective C for iPhone Development

Present

Project Manager

Code The Change, Queen's University, Kingston, ON

2022 - Present

Member

Queen's Space Engineering Design Team

- Assisting in programming and circuiting a lunar mining rover for the NASA Lunabotics competition

2022 - Present

WORK EXPERIENCE

Summer Student, Member & Student Records Representative

Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario, Toronto, ON

- Processed work experience and professional development forms and payments
- Responded to student and member queries via phone and email
- Worked with member and student database using iMIS software

2022

Summer Student, Manager, Network Planning

Bell Canada, Network Planning, Toronto, ON

- Created pivot tables and excel formulas analyzing spreadsheets with information on over 7000 distribution service areas
- Identified anomalies in spreadsheets and created presentations to summarize findings

2021

Linnea is targeting QUIP internship opportunities in tech startups by

- opening with a concise yet descriptive objective tailored to target employers,
- drawing attention to special projects and practical experience,
- offering a clear breakdown of specific skills related to programming languages.



Athletics



QUIP



Skills From Academics

Paul Case

myemail@queensu.ca | 613-555-5555

PROFILE

- **In-depth analytical skills:** refined as a Summer Analyst at Scotiabank and through content and projects in Financial Markets and Risk Management
- **Exceptional verbal communication skills:** developed through working as a Customer Service Representative at Scotiabank
- **Strong research and planning skills:** as a result of participation in three Queen's executive committees organizing conferences

EDUCATION & AWARDS

- **Bachelor of Arts with Honours (Economics),** Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2021-Present**
- Minor in Global Development Studies
- Relevant courses: Financial Markets and Risk Management, Macroeconomic Theory, Microeconomic Theory, Economic Development, Introduction to Statistics, Integral and Differential Calculus

- **"Volunteer of the Month Award",** Queen's Alma Mater Society **February 2022**
- Awarded to a volunteer who shows outstanding dedication and commitment

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- **Customer Service Representative,** TD Canada Trust, Kingston, ON **2023-Present**
- Process account transactions, reconcile and deposit daily funds
- Inform customers of bank products, provide account status data, and refer public to designated personnel
- Received new employee of the month award for excellent customer service skills, asked to help with onboarding of new employees

- **Pool Supervisor, Swim Instructor & Lifeguard,** Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2022-Present**
- Developing leadership skills though being responsible for patron safety
- Demonstrating responsibility through overseeing pool operation

- **STRIVE Committee Member,** Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2022-Present**
- Students Taking Responsible Initiatives for a Viable Environment
- Contributing to a student-run committee focused on advocacy for environmental issues
- Hosted a speaker's night and various fundraisers

- **Summer Analyst,** Scotiabank, Toronto, ON **2022, 2023**
- Worked independently and as part of a team to review business accounts for errors
- Assisted small business branches in correcting account errors

- **Logistics Coordinator,** Queen's Model Parliament, Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2022**
- Organized venues and equipment for a four-day, 330 delegate conference held on Parliament Hill in Ottawa
- Organized special occasions permit, sponsorships, and alumni relations leading to an increase in funding of 25% over previous year's efforts

- **Queen's Cross Country Racing Team,** Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2021-Present**
- Represented Queen's University at multiple races
- Train with the team over 12 hours per week

ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

- **Cashier, Grocery Checkout,** Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2022-2023**
- Ensured quality experience of customers

- **Intramural Water Polo Referee,** Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2022- 2023**
- Responsible for enforcing rules and ensuring fair play

- **Swim Instructor & Lifeguard,** Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2021-2023**
- Learned various communication skills and how to be effective in a team setting

- **Swim Instructor & Lifeguard,** Lifetime Athletic, Mississauga, Ontario **2020-2021**
- Enhanced communication skills through teaching lessons to various age groups

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- **Logistics Coordinator,** Queen's Model UN, Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2022-2023**
- Organized venues and equipment for a four-day inter-university conference
- Arranged transportation, food, and clothing for the conference

- **Logistics Coordinator,** Queen's Model Court, Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2022**
- Organized venues and equipment for a two-day mock trial conference
- Arranged transportation, food, and clothing for the conference

- **Orientation Group Leader,** Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2022**
- Acted as a leader and role model for incoming Queen's Students
- Oriented new students with Kingston and the Queen's community

- **First Year Representative,** Queen's Model Court, Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2021-2022**
- Assisted in the organization of a two-day mock trial conference
- Coordinated sponsorships for the conference

- **Co-Chair,** Queen's Model UN, Queen's University, Kingston, ON **2021-2022**
- Historical Security Council
- Involved in the organization of a four-day inter-university conference
- Organized and regulated debate for the Historical Security Council

Paul is targeting QUIP internship positions in research and policy analysis by

- describing relevant skills and abilities in a profile summary,
- clearly noting skills learned from volunteer experiences and performing job-specific tasks,
- showing skills learned through active involvement in the university community.

WRITING GREAT COVER LETTERS: KEY IDEAS

Your cover letter is a succinct introduction that starts a conversation about what you bring to an employer, organization, or educational program. Typically accompanying a resume, a cover letter positions you as someone who understands the requirements and needs of a role. It is an opportunity for you to focus on memorable stories that will help your application stand out.

- 1 Connect your experience and skills** to the role requirements using specific examples. This helps the reader understand why you will be successful.
- 2 Use keywords** from the posting in your letter.
- 3 Describe** what interests you about the role and/or organization.
- 4 Include the role title and posting number** (if applicable) in the first paragraph of your letter.
- 5 Proofread!** A cover letter is an example of your written communication skills.
- 6 Your cover letter should come first**, followed by your resume, if you are submitting your cover letter and resume together as a file.
- 7 Consider the file name you will use for your document(s).** Using your name and the posting number as the file name is a safe choice (e.g., RSterling_Role12345_CoverLetter.pdf). Some postings might specify the naming structure for your files.



careers.queensu.ca

For more information on writing your cover letter, sign up for the Career Prep Module!

WRITING YOUR COVER LETTER

DIFFERENT STRUCTURES FOR COVER LETTERS

While some parts of the cover letter are always the same, there is no “perfect” order nor content for the paragraphs. Some people will choose to have a paragraph explaining their interest first whereas others will have it as their last paragraph. The best way to judge the order of the content in your cover letter is to consider the impact of each of the paragraphs. Asking someone like a roommate or a family member for their opinion can also be helpful.



TAILORING YOUR COVER LETTER TO AN OPPORTUNITY

Tailor your cover letter by writing a unique cover letter for each specific role. Taking time to network, research the role and organization before writing your cover letter (and resume) can help you describe why you are a strong candidate for the position. You can look at the role description, the organization’s website and/or social media, and additional resources such as the [National Occupational Classification](#) to find useful information that will help you show why you should receive an invitation for an interview.

With the information you gather, you can describe your skills and experience in a way that is relevant to the role. Targeted applications are more likely to attract the attention of the person hiring, and using keywords from the posting will help your application if applicant tracking software (ATS) is being used.

COVER LETTER BASICS

Firstname M. Lastname
myemail@queensu.ca | Phone

Date of Writing
Name of recipient
Organization

Salutation (e.g. “Dear Sheila Gupta” or “Dear Hiring Committee”)

The INTRODUCTION: Tell the reader why you are writing. Essentially, give an indication of who you are (in context – not your name), what you want, and how you came to know about them. Include the position title for which you are applying.

THE RESEARCH PIECE: Tell the employer why you want to work for them. Let them know that you know what they do and why it matters to you. Show that you have investigated the organization and the work.

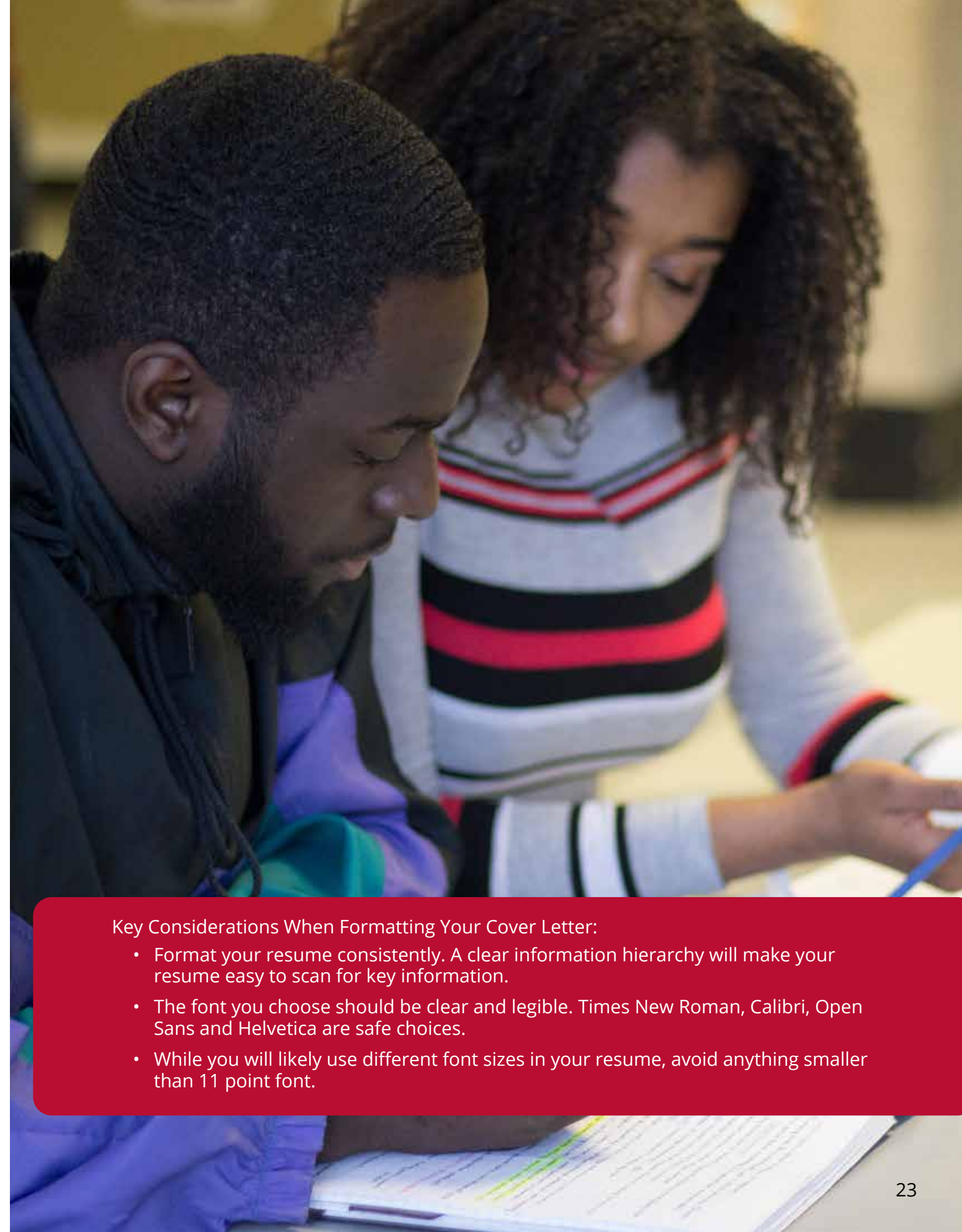
THE MATCH: Highlight the major skills, personality traits and areas of knowledge and expertise that you have to offer, and indicate how your attributes match their needs. Include evidence from past experiences and perhaps tell a brief story of when you have used some of the skills they require.

THE CALL TO ACTION: Emphasize your interest in speaking with them and suggest possibilities for follow-up. Express appreciation.

Sincerely,

Your typed name

This guide is just a starting point. Adapt it to your unique story!



Key Considerations When Formatting Your Cover Letter:

- Format your resume consistently. A clear information hierarchy will make your resume easy to scan for key information.
- The font you choose should be clear and legible. Times New Roman, Calibri, Open Sans and Helvetica are safe choices.
- While you will likely use different font sizes in your resume, avoid anything smaller than 11 point font.

Join our team

Grow your career at Canada's national nuclear laboratory



Canadian Nuclear Laboratories

Laboratoires Nucléaires Canadiens



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What makes Barnard different?

Barnard offers large company capabilities with a small company feel.

Barnard specializes in all aspects of heavy civil construction, including dams and reservoirs, tunnels and shafts, transmission lines and substations, hydro plants and renewable energy projects, oil and gas pipelines, and environmental efforts.

We work throughout Canada and the United States, from Northern British Columbia to South Florida and everywhere between. Our home office is in Bozeman, Montana, where the business began. With one home office, we can maintain that small company feel. You're never just a number at Barnard.

Did you know?

Barnard has delivered some of Canada's most challenging heavy civil projects, including the Keeyask Generating Station and Muskrat Falls North and South Dams. We are currently part of the team developing the Green Line LRT, the largest infrastructure investment in Calgary's history.

In 2023, Barnard ranked #31 among Canada's Top Contractors according to On-Site Magazine.

We value your input from the beginning and will encourage you to lead. Because of our size, interns and recent graduates receive opportunities and responsibilities early in their careers. You won't have to wait to make an impact.

Come build an impressive resume on award-winning projects and learn from the best in the industry.

Contact: Patrick Duffy, Recruiting Manager, patrick.duffy@barnard-inc.com



KEYENCE



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Skills From Academics



Previous Employment



Work or Study Abroad

PATRICK LEUNG

123-456-7890 | myemail@queensu.ca

4 March 2023

Sebastien Cole
Investment Analyst
TD Asset Management

Dear Sebastien Cole,

As a passionate business student specializing in Accounting and Finance, I am constantly seeking opportunities to apply my background, skills, and experiences in a business setting. I look forward to being part of TD Asset Management through the Investment Analyst summer position. TD's reputation for excellence and its focus on client service appeals to me as I would like to contribute my strong quantitative analysis skills in a high-touch customer-centric organization.

Through my coursework, I have recognized and further refined my ability to conduct financial analyses, while gaining a better understanding of areas such as company analysis and valuation. I have become adept at preparing financial statements and reports and conducting company valuations using the Discounted Cash Flow and Comparables approaches. In a recent case competition, my analysis and reporting were put to the test where I had to analyze significant amounts on data, produce company valuations that were accurate and timely, and contributed to us placing first amongst a group of skilled students.

Together with the required analytical skills, I also bring the people skills integral to this job position. With my extensive experience in service-oriented industries, interacting and collaborating with others is not just something I am comfortable with, but it is something I highly enjoy. In addition to being in a rigorous business program that emphasizes teamwork, I spent the past summer working as a Summer Student at a Bank of China branch in Shanghai, China. I interacted with diverse clients on a daily basis, which significantly reinforced my interpersonal and communication skills.

TD is looking for a candidate who is capable of maintaining a close eye for detail and consistently delivering high quality results. In my role as Office and Reception Assistant at Shaw Insurance Services, my attention to entering data accurately along with my efficiency in resolving diverse inquiries from various clients has earned the praise of my supervisors. Thus, as an extremely driven individual, I hope to be able to continue making valuable contributions and to do so as part of the TD team. I am confident in my ability to uphold its existing culture of excellence and I am highly motivated by this unique opportunity for learning, experience, and growth.

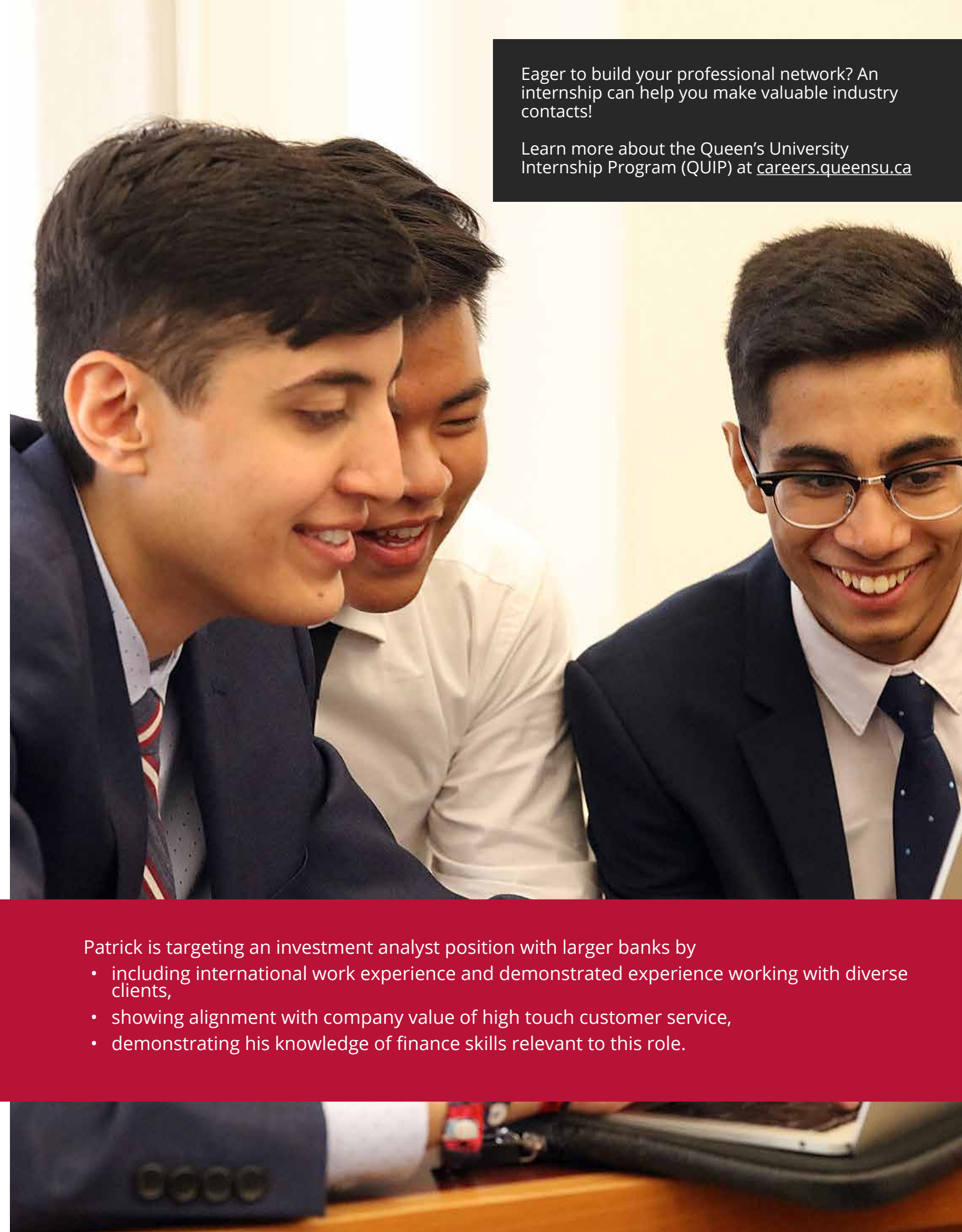
Thank you for taking the time to consider my application. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss my suitability as an Investment Analyst at TD Asset Management in the near future. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions or queries.

Sincerely,

Patrick Leung

Eager to build your professional network? An internship can help you make valuable industry contacts!

Learn more about the Queen's University Internship Program (QUIP) at careers.queensu.ca



Patrick is targeting an investment analyst position with larger banks by

- including international work experience and demonstrated experience working with diverse clients,
- showing alignment with company value of high touch customer service,
- demonstrating his knowledge of finance skills relevant to this role.



Graduate Student



Extracurriculars

APARNA CHAUDHARY

123-456-7890
myemail@queensu.ca

May 24, 2023

Jenny Stewart
Director of Recreation
Visual Arts Windsor

Dear Jenny Stewart,

I am excited to be applying for the position of your Summer Programs Assistant at Visual Arts Windsor (VAW). I am applying for this position for three reasons: a passion for art, experience working with children and desire to give back to the Windsor community.

I am very familiar with the gallery context, as well as community art programming, after working as a student docent for three years at the Agnes Art Gallery at Queen's University. In this role, I led tours of the public gallery and planning and delivering supplementary workshops for groups of elementary and middle school children. Through this experience, I learned to quickly acquire thorough knowledge of the exhibitions and deliver engaging tailored programming both in the gallery and in the studios, leading to positive feedback from guests and my supervisor. It has been very rewarding to be able to inspire and expand perspectives of so many students and visitors of diverse backgrounds, from all over the world.

As well, studying art history has transformed how I view the world and how I value the role of arts education and creativity in our lives. Outside of my studies, I have always actively integrated art into my life—being a set designer and creating graphic design as a side business. In fact, when applying to law school, my personal statement was entirely focused on the impact of art history on my life and perspective.

VAW's pillar of equity and accessibility in your values statement also greatly resonated with me. As a woman of a visible minority, I have also become an advocate for equity and diversity at Queen's. In the position of co-chair for the inaugural Queen's Accessibility and Inclusion Conference last year, I worked with seven other like-minded students in striving to create a hope-focused setting of dialogue and thought leadership where over 90 participants were able to contribute their ideas for a more inclusive community. This conference helped to consolidate my belief that public spaces such as VAW help to provide accessible and affordable arts education and to foster appreciation of the visual arts.

I can assure you of my full commitment to the work of VAW. I look forward to sharing more of my passion for art education with you.

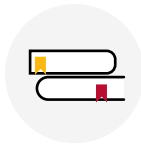
Sincerely,

Aparna Chaudhary



Aparna is targeting a summer position in an arts environment by

- emphasizing their relevant skills for the role, such as the ability to deliver tailored educational programming and working with a range of audiences,
- connecting their advocacy for equity and diversity to their beliefs about art education,
- describing how their interest and involvement with the arts is interwoven with and evolved through their skills and experience.



2nd or 3rd
Year



Skills From
Academics



Previous
Employment

Amanda Pellegrini

myemail@queensu.ca • 123-456-7890

August 8, 2023

Region of Peel: Children's Services

Dear Hiring Committee,

I am applying to the Policy Intern position, which I discovered through the Ontario Public Service (OPS) website. I am particularly interested in working within the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry given my academic focus and interest in working with rural Canadian communities. I am excited to be part of how OPS is working through various initiatives to create policies that support growth in the use of renewable energy in rural communities.

Through my undergraduate degree in Global Development Studies, I have grown in my understanding of how policy intertwines with politics, economics and identity. I have taken foundational courses that include Global Environmental Transformations, a course that integrates social science perspectives on environmental topics such as energy, agriculture and urbanization. My upper year courses focused additionally on the political economy of resource extraction and policy advocacy in Canada.

Through my role as Academics Commissioner for the Arts and Science Undergraduate Society, I established a successful track record for forming positive working relationships with students, faculty, administration, and other stakeholders, listening actively and providing solutions, as well as efficiently resolving conflict. I directly oversaw over 60 individuals in 30 different committees. In this role, I led the development and implementation of a process that increased the quality of students' participation in course evaluations, and better connected evaluation outcomes with course curriculum review cycle processes. I methodically gathered and analyzed historical data from the last ten years to develop recommendations and resolutions that ultimately informed the final version of the process. The success of the pilot year also provided the opportunity for me to present to other faculty society executives as well as to the Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning.

Furthermore, I have been successful in maintaining effective working relationships while prioritizing deadlines and projects. In my second year of university, I was elected to be House President of Smith House, which provided opportunities to influence and create residence policies that took into account university-level strategy, health and safety, as well as the perspective of Smith House residents. While balancing a full academic course load, I ran a house council of 12 students and represented the 271 students of my residence on several university committees.

My experiences have shaped me to be adaptable in new environments and to be solution-oriented in a variety of contexts. Working with this Ministry will allow me to contribute to public interests and, more importantly, to support sustainable economic growth that will benefit the well-being of Ontario's rural communities. I look forward to this opportunity to contribute to the Ontario Public Service through this role. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Amanda Pellegrini



Take advantage of your summer and gain valuable work experience with SWEP!

Learn more about the Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP) at careers.queensu.ca

Amanda is applying for an internship in the Ontario Public Service by

- ensuring she uses relevant keywords and language, as outlined in the job posting, to describe her skills,
- mentioning knowledge of relevant governmental policy trends related to Ontario rural communities,
- describing relevant academic courses that relate to the type of policy work she is applying for.





First year



Technical Skills



Extracurriculars

Simon Thomas

myemail@queensu.ca • 123-456-7890

August 3, 2023

Department of Communications
Queen's University

Dear Hiring Committee,

I am applying for the marketing and design work study position (Job ID 86534) and I am confident that my qualifications in the publication design field make me an ideal candidate for this position.

For the last two years, I have been the editor-in-chief of my high school yearbook, dedicating well over six hundred hours in total. Creating the yearbook is a huge project that requires combining the efforts of at least sixty students to write copy, take pictures, create layouts, and create advertisements all within a set of very tight deadlines. I personally have taught students how to use industry standard publishing programs such as Adobe InDesign and Photoshop. I am able to communicate my ideas to students and teachers in order to have design continuity across the yearbook.

Additionally, I have been the layout designer and a journalist for my school newspaper this past year. I dedicated around twenty hours during the last week of every month to create and deliver a thirty-page issue on time for print, collaborating with graphic artists and writers to ensure I added all their content. I have even maintained straight As in my academics while balancing these other commitments by effectively managing my time.

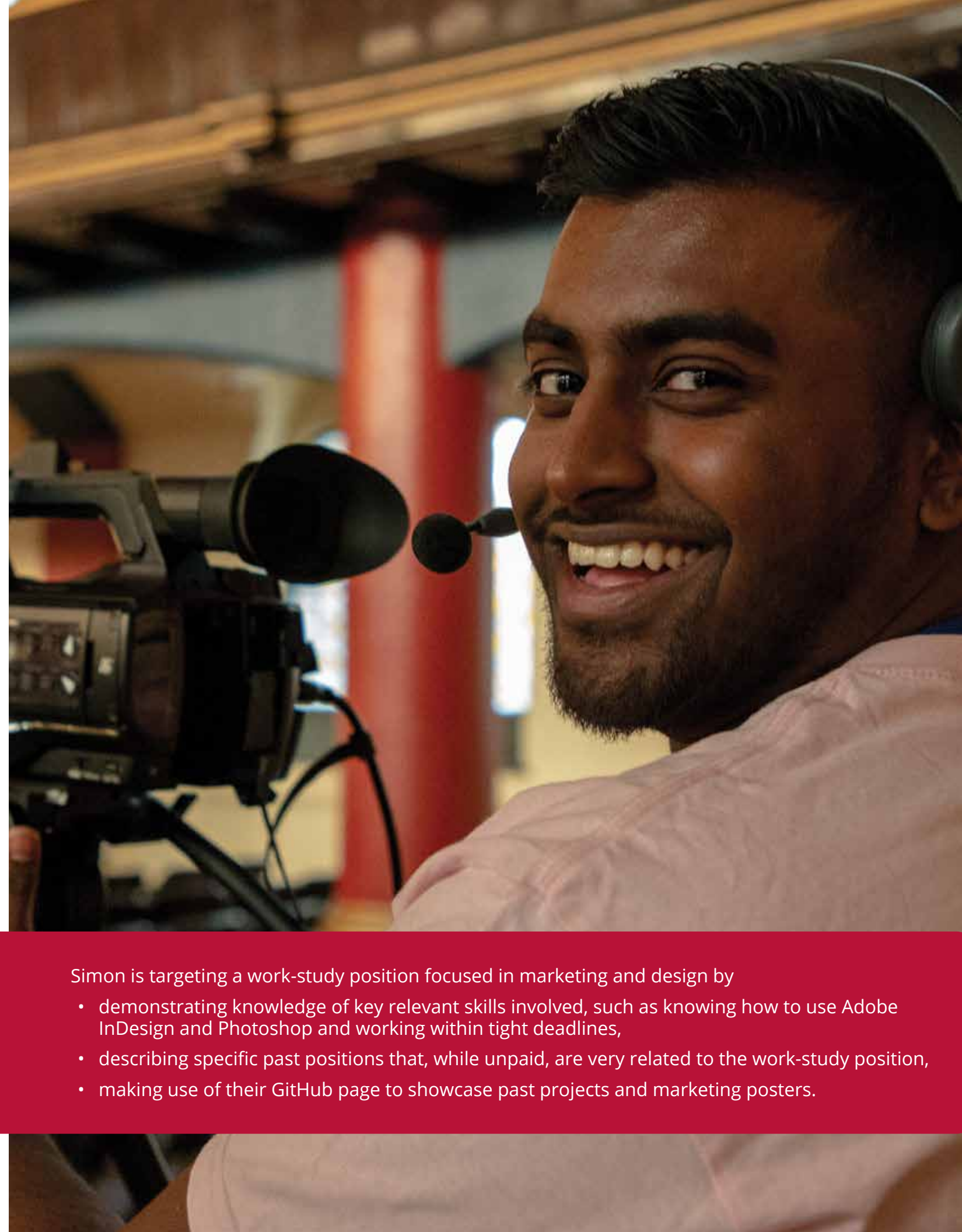
I had no intention of immersing myself in marketing and print design years ago when I began making posters advertising student council events, but it has rapidly grown into my primary extracurricular activity and a passion for me as I have gone on to design entire books and magazine layouts. In the past year, I have extended my skills to include building websites and blogs from scratch. I have created an online portfolio showcasing some of my strongest projects at simonthomas.github.io.

For this position, I am very excited to focus on the annual magazine. I am passionate about getting students involved in their school community, and I have previously organized and advertised a club fair. I can create effective and easy to read infographics, just as I have showcased on my website. On top of that, my experience working on large projects with lots of people and against tight deadlines has taught me to communicate my ideas with others clearly and work in a timely efficient manner.

Thank you for taking the time to review my application and portfolio. I have also attached my résumé and the email detailing my work study entitlement. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Simon Thomas



Simon is targeting a work-study position focused in marketing and design by

- demonstrating knowledge of key relevant skills involved, such as knowing how to use Adobe InDesign and Photoshop and working within tight deadlines,
- describing specific past positions that, while unpaid, are very related to the work-study position,
- making use of their GitHub page to showcase past projects and marketing posters.



Graduate Student



Extracurriculars



Skills From Academics

Riley Bell

123-456-7890
myemail@queensu.com

January 31, 2024

Calgary Public Health

Dear Hiring Committee,

I am writing this letter in reference to completing my summer practicum placement within your organization. I am a current Master of Public Health candidate at Queen's University, and am extremely passionate about bringing my skills and knowledge to Calgary Public Health (CPH). The practicum placement opportunity is particularly intriguing for me, as it will focus on assessing community needs, planning health promotion activities, and providing services for community members.

For the last five years, I have focused on learning about health and health promotion. In my Life Sciences undergraduate degree, I explored the many aspects of human health through courses focused on mental health, nutrition, epidemiology, and physical exercise. I chose to pursue further studies in public health to grow more knowledgeable in how to bridge evidence-based research into action that improves health and wellbeing for all members of society. All of these courses have allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of public health and its role in improving the overall health of the population.

I have grown my expertise in working in an applied health promotion setting through a deep commitment to the Queen's Zumba Club in multiple volunteer executive positions. I am enthusiastic about this program as it provides subsidized Zumba classes to students as a way of promoting positive mental and physical health within the often high stress environment of university. As I work to expand partnerships with community partners in my latest role as Vice-President, I reflect on how impactful the Zumba program has been for over 200 participants in the last few years, many of whom continue from year to year. I have been enthusiastic in creating explicit expectations for a safe and respectful environment that all club members agree to when they join, so that it is an activity that anyone can access.

I understand that working in public health is a form of advocacy that requires strong interpersonal skills, as well as an adaptive ability to work within structures and constraints. My involvement in the club has taught me many lessons in collaboration with fellow executive members, as well as with community organizations and university officials. Over my time involved, I have led and supported our club in successfully navigating and overcoming logistical and financial challenges, while remaining professional, organized, and positive-minded.

I believe my knowledge of public health programming and my interpersonal skills make me a strong candidate for the position. I am eager to explore this opportunity and can be reached at 123-456-7890 or via email at myemail@queensu.com if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Riley Bell



Trying to land a professional opportunity in your field of interest? Search part-time, summer, and after-grad job postings in MyCareer.

Learn more at careers.queensu.ca

Riley is targeting a summer practicum placement related to public health by

- demonstrating her academic training in health promotion,
- identifying how her long-term involvement in the Zumba Club has grown her expertise in the area of health promotion,
- highlighting relevant coursework that forms a good foundation for the work she will do with the organization.

THE PURPOSE OF INTERVIEWS

What is an interview?

An interview is a formal meeting between a candidate (you) and an employer (hiring manager, supervisor, owner) with the express purpose of assessing

- whether you have the skills and experience to be successful in the role, and
- if the position or organization is an opportunity you want to pursue (i.e. is this a place I want to work? Is the role something I am interested in?).

An interview can take place in person, over the phone, or virtually. Sometimes there are rounds of interviews and it is common for more than one person to interview you.

While you will have an opportunity to ask questions about the role and organization, you will answer most of the questions. Be prepared to talk about your knowledge, interests, skills, and values and how they relate to your career goals and the way you work.

For the employer, interviews provide an opportunity to

- assess the candidate's alignment with the opportunity and organization,
- assess the candidate's relevant and transferable skills,
- learn more about the experiences described on the candidate's resume and cover letter, and
- observe the candidate think through and respond to scenarios.

For you, the interviewee, interviews provide an opportunity to

- evaluate if this is a place you want to work,
- make sure your expectations align with the role expectations,
- learn more about the organizational culture, and
- describe your skills and experience in more detail.

Think of interviews as the opportunity for the interviewer(s) and interviewee to meet and learn about each other.



For more information on interviews, sign up for the Career Prep Module!

careers.queensu.ca

HAVING GREAT INTERVIEWS: KEY IDEAS

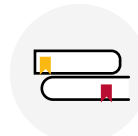
- 1 Confirm the details.** Verify the date, time, length, and location of the interview (including technology requirements for virtual interviews). You can also ask about the type of interview and if there is anything specific you should prepare for (e.g., test or presentation). Most of this information will be included in the interview invitation, but if it isn't just ask!
- 2 Research the position and organization.** Take time to understand the mission and values of the company. This information can help you tailor your answers to the questions, explain your interest in the opportunity, and develop a list of questions for the interviewer(s).
- 3 Prepare answers to common interview questions.** Drafting answers to common interview questions will help you to reflect and recall experiences that you can draw on during the interview. Review the role description to identify key skills or responsibilities and identify your relevant experience. Remember, these examples can come from your previous roles, academic experience, and your day-to-day life. You can learn keywords to gain greater clarity and confidence in defining your skills by reviewing the [Queen's Skills Cards](#).
- 4 Practice.** Take time to practice your answers to common interview questions aloud. Consider practicing in front of a mirror or recording yourself on your phone to pick up on any distracting movements or filler words you may be using. You can also practice with trusted friends and family members to see how others interpret your responses.
- 5 Plan what you are going to wear in advance.** Investigate what people typically wear at the organization and plan an outfit that is a bit more formal. It is generally a good idea to dress more formally for the interview than current staff do on a regular day.
- 6 Manage your confidence.** While it can be hard to feel confident when preparing for an interview, it can help to focus on your strengths, get practice, and remember that they chose to interview you and want you to succeed.
- 7 Send a thank you note.** After your interview, send a thank you note by email to everyone who participated in the interview.
- 8 Request accommodation if you need it.** Should you need accommodation for any portion of the interview, it is best to request this in advance.



Extracurriculars



Skills From Academics



2nd or 3rd Year

INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

1 ARRIVAL

For in-person interviews, it is recommended to arrive 15 minutes early. Arriving early shows you are organized and respectful of the interviewers' time. Be respectful and professional towards everyone you meet—beyond simple courtesy, you never know the influence of an interaction.

For online interviews, unless instructed otherwise, it is recommended that you join the virtual meeting 5-10 minutes early. This allows you enough time to make sure that your technology is working.

2 INTRODUCTIONS

For in-person interviews, try your best to make a strong first impression in the first few minutes. As the interviewer approaches to greet you, stand up to greet them with confident, enthusiastic remarks, and consider offering a handshake. Be sure to smile and make eye contact. If there are other interviewers present, the interviewer should also introduce them to you; if not, take the initiative to greet and introduce yourself to each person.

For online interviews, a similar series of events will take place. Look directly at your camera regularly to create the impression of making eye contact with the interviewers.

3 QUESTIONS

This stage is the focus of the interview and will consist of introductory questions, followed by questions specifically related to the role. This is your opportunity to make the case for why you are the best candidate for the role.

4 CONCLUSION

At the end of the interview, it is common practice for the interviewer to ask if you have questions for them, so it is also appropriate to inquire further about the next steps of the interview process. To conclude, express your appreciation for the interview opportunity, restate your interest, and, for in-person interviews, consider offering another handshake.

This student is targeting a summer position in a marketing environment after their third-year of study.

Interviewer : "Hello, welcome to our office. Nice to meet you. Looks like you found the place okay?"

Candidate : "I did—your instructions were very clear. Nice to meet you too, thanks for having me!"

1 Exchange greetings and brief small talk

Int : "Please take a seat. I'll dive right in with the first question. If you'd like to skip a question and come back to it, let us know and we can move on to the next one. Are you ready to get started?"

C : "Yes, thank you."

Int : "Great. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?"

C : "I'm from Montreal and French is my first language, and I'm currently completing my third year in a Bachelor of Commerce at Queen's University.

When I started university, I wasn't entirely certain what kind of career I wanted to pursue after graduation. After taking an introductory marketing course in first year, I became really interested in the strategies and methods used to develop marketing campaigns and have shifted my education towards this area of study...

Int : "Okay, what interests you about this position?"

C : "I'm interested in this position because I think your organization is always taking steps to reflect the most current marketing tools and strategies, and I'm eager to work in an environment that's so forward-thinking and growth-oriented..."

Int : "That was our last question. Before we finish the interview, do you have any questions for us?"

C : "Yes, could you tell me more about the day-to-day responsibilities of this job?"

Int : "Absolutely, this role would require you to provide assistance to staff throughout the office on a number of projects..."

GENERAL QUESTIONS

General questions allow the interviewer(s) to learn about your interest in the position and your motivation for joining their organization. These questions are also a way for them to assess your values and attitude and how they align with their organizational culture.

INTERVIEWER: “WHY DO YOU WANT TO WORK HERE?”

Candidate :

“I developed my ability to actively listen to customers through my work experience with different organizations. I’m ready to apply that expertise with an organization committed to its employees and consistently ranked as one of the city’s best places to work. I love working with people, and I’m particularly excited that this role will allow me to use my bilingualism to work with clients. Something that really impresses me is how your five-year plan focuses on capacity-building, including various ways of empowering those who are receiving support and services to be part of the conversation. I look forward to being part of a team that brings people and resources together in a dignified, hope-giving way to strengthen the community.”

The interviewee explains their interest in the position by detailing the connection between their previous work experience and the opportunity. They focus on the skills and experience they bring to the role and highlight what interests them about the organization.

INTERVIEWER: “WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DO YOU BELIEVE WILL MAKE YOU SUCCESSFUL IN THIS POSITION?”

Candidate :

“As someone who’s passionate about innovation and seeks to find better ways to do work, I appreciate how your school board is forward-focused. You quickly transitioned your operations to be remote during COVID-19, taking full advantage of the latest video platforms to meet with students in a setting that’s traditionally always been in-person. Offering lessons over Zoom is challenging, but this board really met that challenge head-on and started offering remote lessons in the first week after physical classrooms were closed. When I began looking for a new position, I purposefully sought out school boards that are committed to integrity and innovation, and this one ranks at the top of that list. I also believe my strong background in primary education aligns with the core responsibilities of this role.”

The interviewee demonstrates their qualifications for the position by connecting their personal qualities to the school board’s culture and work environment they use information about the organization and the responsibilities and skills from the job description to guide their response.

“TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF”

Because this question (or a version of it) is so commonly asked, here are some additional strategies to help you develop an answer. Remember, this question helps the interviewer to learn more about who you are, so use the opportunity to highlight the experiences, skills, and interests most relevant to the position.

In your answer, you want to tell a story about your relevant skills and experience and highlight how you came to be interested in the role. Your answer can include details about your

- **Past:** What experiences led to your interest in the field and/or developed the relevant skills needed for the role?
- **Present:** What are you currently doing (role, education, clubs, and/or activities) that demonstrates your skills, abilities, and interest?
- **Future:** Conclude your answer by showing how these elements connect to the role you are interviewing for and how you hope to continue developing your knowledge and skills with this opportunity.

Ideally, your answer should highlight 2-4 skills and/or experiences that are relevant to the role and show why you are interested in the position and/or organization.

Your answer should be

- brief (1-3 minutes),
- relevant (avoid tangents), and
- professional.

Candidate :

“I’ve just completed my fourth year of applied mathematics and engineering at Queen’s. When I was considering engineering programs, I decided to move from BC to pursue my studies in Ontario, as I enjoy taking risks and immersing myself in new environments. I’ve really tried challenging myself in all areas of my life. After first year, I joined the Canadian Armed Forces Reserves and I’ve spent my summers as a soldier, completing boot camp and various military courses. At Queen’s, I improved my leadership skills by being an engineering orientation leader, where I mentored 30 first year engineering students. After my second year, I did an international internship as a backend software engineer at a fin-tech start-up in the Philippines. This experience was when I really came to understand data science. As I spent more time working alongside the data science team, I became fascinated with how they were able to digest large sets of data and create relevant correlations. I’m excited to apply for this role because I see the important connections between data analytics and client relations—using concrete numbers and trends to tell stories is powerful.”

The candidate connects their most impactful educational and professional experiences to their interest in the position. They tailor their answer to the role and organization by concluding with the direct connection between the role they are applying for and their experience.

BEHAVIOURAL QUESTIONS

Interviewers ask behavioural interview questions to try to understand how you will perform in a role based on your previous experience. These questions allow the employer to assess your experience, demonstrated ability to handle specific work, and transferable skills. These questions provide you with the opportunity to show how you can be successful even if you do not have previous experience in a specific industry or role.

Examples of behavioural interview questions:

- Can you tell me about a time when you had to lead people through a challenge?
- Can you tell me about a time when you had a conflict with a co-worker and how you handled that?
- Can you tell me about a time when you had to manage a project? What did you do to ensure that the project was successful?

THE S-T-A-R METHOD

Situation

Briefly describe a specific situation you were in, including the context and the individuals involved.

e.g. During my internship last summer, I was responsible for managing various events.

Task/Tactics

Describe your responsibility in that situation. Convey your rationale, including your thought process and the options considered.

e.g. I noticed that attendance at these events had dropped by 30% over the past 3 years and wanted to do something to improve these numbers.

Actions

Outline the steps that were taken to complete the task or overcome the challenge. It is important to focus on your individual contribution even in a collaborative setting- e.g. "I did ABC," instead of "we did ABC."

e.g. I designed a new promotional packet to go out to the local community businesses. I also included a rating sheet to collect feedback on our events and organized internal round table discussions to raise awareness of the issue with our employees.

Results

Explain the tangible outcomes generated by your actions. Consider emphasizing what you accomplished, both qualitatively and quantitatively, or what you learned from this situation.

e.g. We utilized some of the wonderful ideas we received from the community, made our internal systems more efficient and visible and raised attendance by 18% in the first year.

SITUATIONAL QUESTIONS

Situational questions seek to understand how you would respond to a hypothetical situation (E.g. "If you were in X situation, what would you do?"). These questions often help the interview panel assess your problem-solving and technical skills. The panel may also be interested in understanding how you think and what your priorities are. It can be hard to prepare for these questions because you won't know the scenario until it is asked. However, there are some general tips and approaches to help you answer situational questions.

CHALLENGING QUESTIONS

Sometimes in interviews, you will be asked about your weaknesses or times you have failed. Interviewers ask these questions to better understand your thought and decision-making processes, self-awareness, and values. Focus on providing specific examples and explaining how these experiences have helped you to grow: turn the negative into a positive. Be sure to demonstrate how any weaknesses will not impact your future work. And remember, everyone has a weakness, and everyone has failed.



To learn more about strategies for interviewing, please refer to the Career Prep Module "Interviewing".



careers.queensu.ca

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

The last question asked in most interviews is “Do you have any questions for us?” Prepare by thinking ahead about what you might want to ask. Your questions allow you to get information that will help you assess whether this opportunity is what you want. Your questions also contribute to the impression you make on the interviewer(s) by revealing your priorities.

It is usually recommended to avoid asking questions related to salary, benefits, and personal topics until an offer has been extended to you. As well, try not to ask questions you could have answered yourself through a quick online search.

INTERVIEWER: “THOSE WERE ALL OF OUR QUESTIONS FOR YOU TODAY—DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS FOR US?”

Candidate :

- “What are the challenges of this position?”
- “Who would I be working with and reporting to?”
- “How would you describe the organization’s culture?”
- “What are the organization’s top priorities this year, and how does the role contribute?”
- “What type of skills enable employees to be successful here?”
- “What kind of professional development opportunities are provided to employees in the organization?”
- “Can you tell me what a typical day in this job would be like?”
- “What changes would you like to see made over the next year by the person who takes this job?”

These students ask open-ended questions to learn further details about the position and the organization. This approach allows them to better understand the expectations of a successful candidate and demonstrates their interest in the role and a future with the organization.

WHAT ABOUT SALARY & NEGOTIATION?

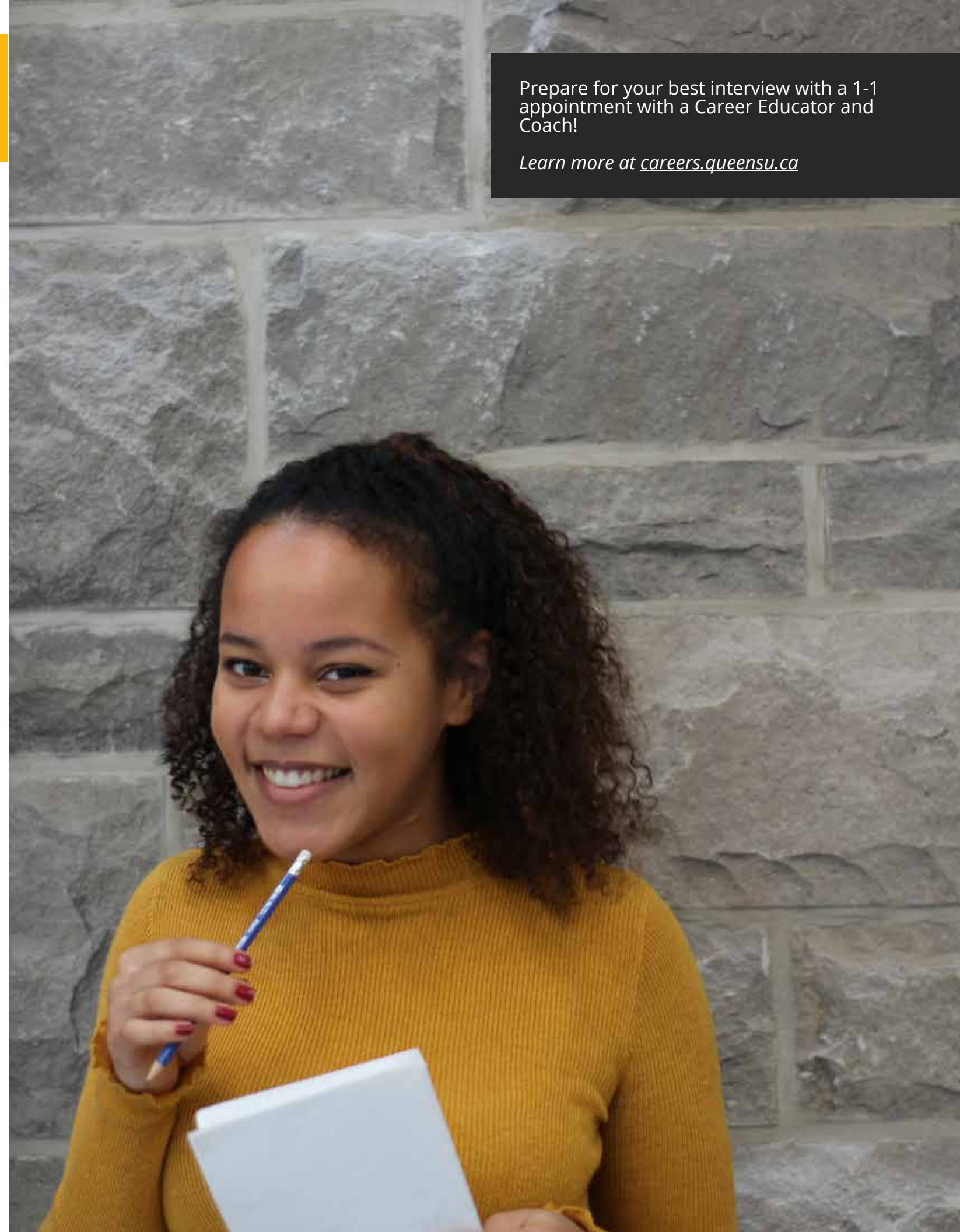
Be prepared in case your interviewer asks about your salary expectations. Research the market rate for similar work in the area, keeping in mind that salary is affected by your skill level and qualifications, as well as by other factors like the local cost of living and labour market demand.

For further support on the topic of salary negotiation, we recommend the following resources:

- LinkedIn Learning courses
- [Negotiating Your Job Offer](#)
- [Negotiating Your Salary](#)
- Labour market surveys from professional associations
- Websites like Glassdoor.com for company reviews and salary ranges submitted by current and past employees

Prepare for your best interview with a 1-1 appointment with a Career Educator and Coach!

Learn more at careers.queensu.ca



DISCLOSURE

There may be times during your interview processes where you need to decide whether or not—and if so, when—to disclose personal information to an employer. Students often wonder if they want to disclose information related to disability, identity, political activity, or religious activity, and when would be most effective if they do. During an interview, you may want to disclose some aspect of your identity...

- **To identify as part of an equity-seeking group.** If an employer is recruiting candidates from equity-seeking groups, disclosing may help your application and increase the likelihood you receive an interview. This is often a sign the organization is open and supportive of disclosures.
- **To demonstrate relevant knowledge and experience.** If the position involves working within a specific community, you may want to disclose that you are member of that community, and any experiences you have from living, volunteering, or working in that community.
- **To acquire accommodations.** If you require an accommodation, you will need to disclose what type of accommodation you need (but you do not need to disclose any health information). This does not necessarily need to happen in an interview. You can wait to get a job offer, and then discuss what accommodation(s) you require.
- **To lead and shape the narrative.** You are the best person to inform an interviewer about who you are. Initiating the discussion on your terms can help you to feel more empowered, while dispelling misinformation and representing your needs.

INTERVIEWER: “CAN YOU TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELF?”

Candidate : “This contract involves working in an emergency housing facility for young people to coordinate resource workshops and presentations. I’m interested in finding solutions for social inequities because my family struggled financially for most of my life. We depended on the local food bank, and I experienced homelessness for about six months when I was a teenager. I’m sharing this information because I’ve spent the last four years trying to support the resources I’ve personally depended on for success. I used my education to learn more about the structure of social inequities, while volunteering at the student-run food bank. Having experienced food insecurity before, I often had a unique perspective to offer on operations. I believe I can bring my academic background and personal experience with homelessness to this job to create effective support systems for young people in need.”

This student chooses to disclose their personal information because of how it demonstrates relevant knowledge and experience for the position they are interviewing for.

To learn more about disclosure and accommodations, we have additional resources available on our website careers.queensu.ca.

AFTER AN INTERVIEW

Reflect on The Experience

When the interview is finished, you may want to spend some time reflecting on the experience.

Make notes about how you think your interview went. Write down the questions you answered well, and those you found more challenging. Consider what you would like to improve for the next time you meet with an employer.

You can also make note of the questions you were asked and use them to prepare for a different interview.

Send a Thank You Email

Within 24 hours of the interview, send the interviewers a brief thank you email. In your email, thank them for the opportunity to learn more about the organization and interview for the position. You can also confirm your interest in the position.

- Begin the email with a personalized greeting and then focus on showing appreciation for the interviewers’ time during the interview.
- Mention something specific you enjoyed learning about or that you discussed in the interview.
- Reaffirm your interest in the role and show enthusiasm for the next steps of the interview process by reiterating your openness to be contacted.
- Adjust the tone of the thank you note to reflect your writing style, situation, and industry.

Sample Thank You Note

Hello [name],

Thank you again for your time interviewing me for the position of [position title] with [organization]. I enjoyed our conversation, and it was a pleasure to learn more about the [position title] position and the team. It sounds like an exciting opportunity, and I am eager to contribute my skills and experience, particularly in [project area or any aspect of the role that was discussed].

I look forward to further discussing this opportunity with you, and hearing about the next steps in the interview process. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide additional information about my candidacy.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

NEXT STEPS

This magazine provided you with a basic understanding of how to format, write, and tailor your resume and cover letter, as well as how to prepare for your next interview.

To learn more about these topics and to expand your knowledge on other career-related topics, we have additional resources available for you.

Career Prep Modules

Enroll in the self-guided Career Prep Modules to explore your career options and to learn more about the fundamentals and strategies for resumes, cover letters, interviews and networking. Access the modules through the Career Services Website.

Attend Drop-In Advising

Visit Career Services on floor 3 of Gordon Hall (or online) for drop-in advising (no appointment required). Meet with a Career Educator and Coach or QUIP coordinator for 15 mins to ask any questions and determine next steps. Visit the Career Services website or MyCareer for the schedule.

Book an Appointment

Book an appointment with a Career Educator and Coach to discuss your career exploration, including resume/cover letter and connecting your degree with a career. During the appointment, you can also practice answering interview questions, build professional skills, and learn how to optimize your job search. Book an appointment through MyCareer.

Attend a Workshop

Attend a workshop online or in-person to learn more about resume and cover letter fundamentals, and strategies for job search, interviewing and networking. Check the workshop schedule in MyCareer.



careers.queensu.ca

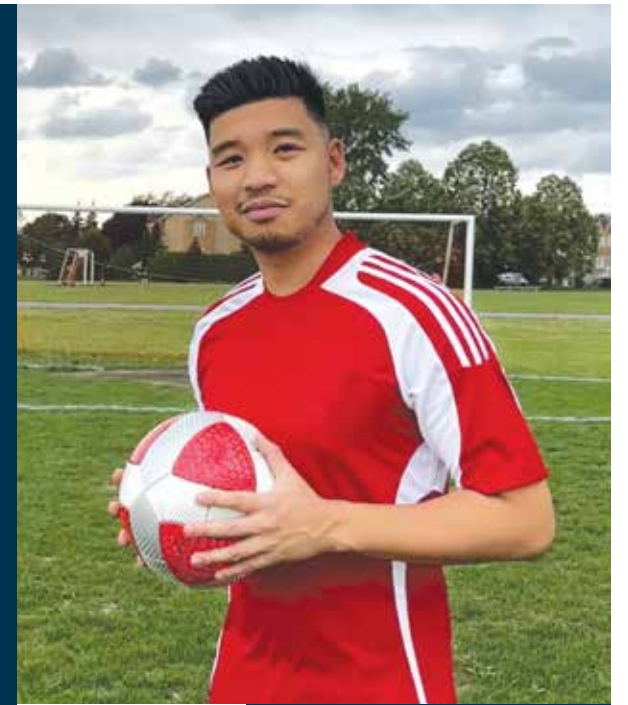
Follow the QR code to the Career Services website to learn more about the resources above!



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