

THE ABC ON HOW TO APPLY

– STUDENT JOBS, INTERNSHIPS,
PRACTICAL PROJECTS AND FULL TIME JOBS



SYDDANSKUNIVERSITET.DK

THE PURPOSE OF THIS ABC

At some point during your time as an international student at the University of Southern Denmark the wish to get a relevant student job outside the university may arise. You may wish to work as an intern or to write a project together with a company. Or you may choose to stay in Denmark once you have completed your course.

At all events it is very possible that you will find that applying for a job in Denmark may differ from the standards that you are familiar with from your home country.

That is why the CareerCentre has made this ABC on how to apply. The aim of the ABC is to make sure that your application and CV are consistent with the Danish standards and thereby to ensure the greatest chance of success.

At the same time it is important to emphasize that, even if you follow Danish standards, there is no precise recipe for the perfect application or the perfect CV. The ABC provides guidelines that should be used as inspiration and that are intended to equip you to present your qualifications in a Danish context. Once you have started writing your application and CV, you are welcome to visit the CareerCentre, where it is possible to have a personal talk with one of the CareerCentre's consultants. The consultants will be happy to read your application and provide you with some final advice before the application is sent.

Read It – Be inspired – Contact us!

Best regards

CareerCentre | KarriereCentret
University of Southern Denmark

WHO ARE WE?

The CareerCentre offers a variety of services regarding all manner of job opportunities and career decisions. The CareerCentre is a free service for all students at the University of Southern Denmark.

What are the prospects offered by your course? How does the Danish labour market work? What are Danish companies looking for in academics? And where do you find jobs, internships, and student jobs? At the CareerCentre we can help you with questions like these. You are welcome to visit us, if you have questions regarding job and career.

The CareerCentre functions as a link between the university and the business community. Our business consultants are in close contact with both public and private companies in the region. Further information about the CareerCentre, opening hours, its employees etc. can be found on our website www.sdu.dk/career.

For example, the CareerCentre offers:

- Career counselling
- Contact with companies regarding internships
- Feedback on CV's, resumes and written applications
- Help during the job-seeking process
- Information about Danish labour market
- Events for students

You are welcome to book an appointment with one of our career consultants to learn more. If you need a counseling session, please make an appointment in our online booking system at www.sdu.dk/career. If you need feedback on a CV or a application, please upload all relevant documents when booking the appointment.

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A GUIDE ON HOW TO APPLY

We recommend that you look through this ABC before you begin writing an application for a student job, internship or the like. In the ABC you will be able to read about student jobs, internships, projects and full time jobs, such as what it means to write a motivated application or when to start looking for an internship. Furthermore, you will find examples of a CV, an application and preparations for the job interview. The intention of the ABC is that it should be used as an introductory tool. Once you have read it and have adapted your application to Danish standards, you are welcome to contact one of the consultants at the CareerCentre. The consultants are able to answer more detailed questions.

And remember: Learn Danish as soon as possible. If you are interested in working in Denmark, you need basic Danish language skills. If you learn some Danish while you are studying, your chance of getting a job improves greatly. For more information please contact The International Office by e-mail (int@sdu.dk). They will answer your questions as promptly as they can.

APPLICATION (COVERING LETTER)

When you are writing an application, it is important to describe why you are applying for the job, how you can contribute to the company and why you should get the job. In order to answer these questions, you need to highlight the unique qualifications you possess that separate you from the rest of the applicants. It is also a good idea to point out the specific professional and personal qualifications and experience you have gained through for example, previous student jobs, courses and hobbies. The application should typically cover 1 standard page (A4).

You use an application when you are applying for a job, an internship or a project. The application can either be solicited or unsolicited. The difference is that a solicited application is typically sent as a response to a job advertisement posted by a company, whereas an unsolicited application is sent to show that you would be interested in working with the company or organization should any job opportunities arise. Usually a CV is enclosed with the application. An application has a forward perspective and describes how your skills and experience match the job in question, whereas the CV mentions your previous experience.

UNSOLICITED APPLICATION

With an unsolicited application your job is to convince the company that they need your qualifications and to create a job for you. This means that your unsolicited application needs to be clearly targeted and to describe how your qualifications and skills can make a difference to the company. You need to convince the company that they can make a profit by hiring you.

Always remember to follow up on an unsolicited application. When you contact companies after having sent an unsolicited application, you can for instance ask if they have looked at your CV and application. If they cannot offer you a job you can ask for suggestions for improvements? Or ask if they know of any companies that might be looking for employees at the moment.

CV (RESUMÉ)

The CV is used to describe what you have done previously. Usually your CV is used to supplement an application. The CV has a backwards perspective and describes your previous experiences in relation to the job in question.

Basically there are two different ways of writing a CV. You can choose to arrange your CV in a chronological order or present it according to your skills. Whichever method you use, it is common for the CV to give a short and structured list of your relevant experience and qualifications. The CV usually contains information about your educational background, experience from student jobs, languages and IT skills, personal interests etc.

If you write a skill-based CV you can for instance mention both your technical, personal and general academic skills. Technical skills can e.g. be: Communication and presentation, problem-solving, data-processing, understanding of numbers, understanding of business, IT, marketing, analysis, organization, Human Resource, Project management, team work, sales and customer service, planning, overview and control etc. Examples of personal qualifications can be: organized, structured and empathic. When you are describing your qualifications it is a good idea to support them with concrete examples.

It is always a good idea to make the CV personal and accessible for the reader. Remember that the CV should match the job just like the application. You can find examples of targeted CV on various jobsites, e.g. on www.workindenmark.dk – and remember to make sure that your CV is always up-to-date.

Danish companies are not used to reading Europass CVs, so we will not recommend you to use the Europass template here in Denmark.

PROJECT

A project is an opportunity for you to work with a company or an organization when you are about to write your bachelor thesis or your master's thesis. This is a chance to gain positive experience and results in collaboration with a company. The collaboration is a part of your study programme and it is an excellent way to achieve valuable work experience, which is an asset for your CV. The extent of the collaboration with the company will differ from project to project. In some cases it may be sufficient to be in contact with the company once or twice, while in others more meetings will be required.

It is a good idea to have an informal meeting with the company at which you can discuss the thesis and talk about your mutual expectations of the collaboration. After the first meeting it is a good idea to meet and discuss the project with your supervisor at the university who is to approve the project. Afterwards it is possible for you and the company to sign a contract and continue your collaboration.

You need to make contact with the company, but you are welcome to book an appointment with us first in order to learn more about how the contact should take place and where you can find relevant companies. Contact the CareerCentre early in the process, possibly 3-4 months before you are going to start the project. This will provide you with the best opportunity of finding the most suitable project.

It is possible to find current project advertisements and more information in the job bank www.sdu.dk/jobbank.

INTERNSHIP

An internship is usually incorporated into your study programme and is also a good way to gain work experience to include in your CV. In other words the internship is a part of your programme and not a supplement. The number of weekly working hours differs from internship to internship. Usually the internship is full time, which is about 37 working hours a week, but it is possible to have fewer hours, if, for example, you wish to attend classes during the internship. This should be agreed with the company. The period of internship is usually about three to five months but it depends on your study and curriculum. Most study programmes require you to write a report about your work during the internship, which will be graded by your intern supervisor. It is a good idea to talk to the academic supervisor because the procedure is different from course to course (see the website of your Faculty or Institute for contact information of your academic supervisor). You need to have the internship approved in advance by the study board in order to receive credits. The procedure varies from study to study; therefore ask the secretariat or the academic supervisor.

It is important to bear in mind that the internship should not prolong your time of study. If you receive 10 or 20 ECTS points for your internship, it is important that you have the opportunity to attend classes, write assignments etc. simultaneously. That way you will not get behind with your studies.

As a general rule the internship is unpaid, but it is possible that some companies will agree to cover expenses in connection with the internship e.g. transportation costs. At some engineer studies with a mandatory internship, the intern will receive a internship salary. For more information please contact the international academic coordinator at your study.

Please note that, even though an internship is unpaid, the Danish Immigration Service requires all non-EU students to apply for a work permit in order to work as an intern in Denmark.

It is possible to receive further information about internship on the University of Southern Denmark's official job bank at www.sdu.dk/jobbank. On the website it is possible to find current advertisements for e.g. interns. The CareerCentre is ready to help you with both solicited and unsolicited intern applications. And remember we read your application and provide feedback.

STANDARD AGREEMENTS WHEN COLLABORATING WITH A COMPANY (INTERNSHIPS AND PROJECTS)

The CareerCentre recommends that you have clear guidelines before you enter into collaboration with a company. It is possible to use a written collaboration agreement or an internship contract in order to clarify the parties' expectations of the collaboration. In this way both parties know what to expect from the cooperation in advance.

You can read more about this and see an example of an internship contract and a written collaboration agreement on the website www.sdu.dk/career and press 'Project'.

STUDENT JOB

A student job is a job that you have in your spare time from the university. A student job can be relevant for your study, which means that the student job allows you to try out relevant skills in connection with your studies or your future career. It is also possible to have a student job that is not relevant for your study, but both types of student job provide you with certain qualifications and experience. It goes without saying that a relevant student job provides you with more experience. You can find student jobs in the CareerCentre's job bank www.sdu.dk/jobbank. On the website you will be able to find a variety of student jobs. A typical student job involves approximately 2-15 working hours a week, and it is also possible to be hired as a project employee in a temporary position. The average salary is between 110-130 kr. per hour.

It is our experience that a lack of proficiency in Danish is often the biggest challenge for international students when they are looking for a student job.

Please be aware of the fact that when you get a student job, you will be asked to sign a contract with the company. It is the responsibility of the employer to provide the documentation that you will have to sign. If you are a member of a Union, we recommend you to get your contract checked before signing it.

FULL TIME JOB

If you decide to stay in Denmark after your graduation please note that you have to check the rules for residence and work permit.

On Workindenmark's website www.workindenmark.dk you can receive useful information on all aspects related to staying and working in Denmark – for example:

- rules related to residence and work
- corporate culture
- living conditions in Denmark
- job hunting

On www.workindenmark.dk you can also see vacant jobs and you can enter your CV in the CV bank so Danish employers can find it.

If you have any questions you are welcome to contact the local Workindenmark center at:
Workindenmark South, Dannebrogsgade 3, 5000 Odense C,
Phone: +45 72 22 33 30, E-mail: south@workindenmark.dk

GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN A COMPANY

A graduate programme is a full-time job, for newly graduates with a bachelor or master degree. Often the period is a minimum of 1 year.

A graduate programme is not a part of your study as an internship is. Most graduate programmes are offered to university graduates, primarily by large companies. As with all other jobs there is a considerable difference between the possible graduate positions. They vary as regards context, length, structure and language requirements.

JOB BANK

www.sdu.dk/jobbank is the University of Southern Denmark's official job bank for projects, internships, student jobs and jobs for graduates. The purpose of the job bank is to provide students and graduates with the opportunity to work both in public and private companies and organizations. On the website you will find current advertisements for e.g. projects and internships all over Denmark and abroad. Many of the advertisements will be in Danish, but use Google translator or try to get a fellow student or a friend to help with the translation. If you find an interesting job advertisement written in Danish, we will still recommend you to apply.

On our website www.sdu.dk/career you can find links to other relevant websites and job banks.

EXAMPLE OF AN APPLICATION AND CV

On the following pages you will be able to find examples of a targeted application and CV. The examples are only for inspiration and are not to be copied! It is important that you write your application in your own words so it reflects the way you are and the way you communicate.

Remember to target the application to the Company.

It is a good idea to start the application with a headline that presents yourself and catches the attention at the same time.

Place, day/month/year

GRADUATE IN BUSINESS WITH DRIVE TO EXCEL AND A PASSION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Due to xxxx's world-class position and your constant focus on the environment, I find that being part of your Graduate Program would enable me to gain insight into xxxx's global organization, while at the same time facing new challenges both professionally and personally. With my educational background in business, my work experience in marketing and my international profile, I am sure that I am the perfect candidate for this position.

It is important to start your application with a strong, targeted motivation where you include what you can add to the position.

FOCUS ON BUSINESS AND ENVIRONMENT

My master's degree in Business and Marketing gives me a solid business understanding with special insight into Marketing, Branding and Business Law. I will use my business understanding as well as my sharp analytical skills to undertake the different business tasks related to your Graduate Program. I like being in front when it comes to formulating new strategies and concepts, and as a member of the Marketing Committee at my University, I was involved in the creation and implementation of various marketing strategies. Recently, in my master thesis project, I have focused on branding and environment which is why, as a Postgraduate in your Graduate Program, I also see a possibility of taking part in projects focusing on this topic.

Make sure that you answer the job ad and the requirements set in the ad. It gives the Company an idea of how you will fulfill the job and the tasks.

WORK EXPERIENCE IN MARKETING

During the last years, I have gained professional experience and a deep understanding of the Danish work environment from working primarily in the marketing and sales departments at various Danish companies. During my student job at xxxx A/S, I conducted marketing research and prepared entry strategies to new markets.

When you mention experiences from e.g. an internship or student job you have to express how you can use the exact experience in this new context.

I was also responsible for sales activities such as preparation of sales quotations, price calculations and customer service. During my internship at xxx Aps, I gained a lot of experience in project management supporting the Company's director in entering a new market in Eastern Europe. I will be glad to build on my existing work experience and meet new challenges within your marketing department through your Graduate Program.

I like to excel in what I do and I have been appreciated by my teachers and employers for my professionalism and positive attitude. I am open, energetic and good at networking. I believe that I am a perfect match for this position.

Your personal profile is important. Focus on some of your personal traits having in mind how you fit the Company's culture.

I look forward to hearing from you and will be available for an interview at any time.

Remember to end the application in a way in which you express that you are looking forward to hearing from the Company.

Best Regards

Your Name and Surname

CHECKLIST ON WHAT A GOOD APPLICATION SHOULD CONTAIN

- 1. TARGET YOUR APPLICATION AT SPECIFIC COMPANY**
 - Research each company so the company can see that you have a basic knowledge of the company.
- 2. FOCUS ON 10 APPLICATIONS RATHER THAN 100**
 - If your application is customized to suit each company, you will need to apply for far fewer internships/jobs to get hired.
- 3. TELL THE COMPANY WHAT YOU CAN OFFER THE COMPANY INSTEAD OF WHAT THEY CAN OFFER YOU**
 - It is important to tell the company how your knowledge and skills can contribute to the company.
- 4. TALK ABOUT YOUR MOTIVATION FOR APPLYING, YOUR BACKGROUND AND YOUR SKILLS**
 - Are applying because of a well-known brand, because you have a dream of pursuing a career within their field, because they are specialists within your area of interest, or for some other reason?
- 5. MAKE SURE YOUR MESSAGE IS CLEAR: WHY ARE YOU APPLYING AND WHY SHOULD THEY HIRE YOU?**
 - If you can't tell the company your strengths, why should they be interested in you?
- 6. EMPHASIZE YOUR PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS SO THE COMPANY CAN GET AN IDEA OF WHO YOU ARE**
 - The choice of a candidate/intern is often based on a mix of technical, personal and general skills. There is plenty of room for your specific technical skills in your CV.
- 7. FOCUS ON YOUR STRONG POINTS**
 - Everybody can claim that they are development-orientated, but by giving an example you support your argument.
- 8. THE APPLICATION PRESENTS THE FUTURE WHEREAS THE CV PRESENTS THE PAST**
- 9. FOLLOW UP ON YOUR UNSOLICITED APPLICATION PERSONALLY**
 - Part of your (unsolicited) application should be that you will be in touch within a week. This contact is also a chance to get some feedback so you can improve your covering letter.

- 10. THE APPLICATION HAS TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY A TARGETED CV**
- 11. ADDRESS THE APPLICATION TO A SPECIFIC PERSON EITHER IN HR OR THE DEPARTMENT YOU ARE INTERESTED IN**
 - By writing Dear Sir/Madam you indicate that you haven't taken the time to do your research.
- 12. STANDARD APPLICATIONS DO NOT WORK**
 - Employers do not want to see an application that could be use to apply for any other position.
- 13. YOUR APPLICATION SHOULD TAKE UP ABOUT ONE PAGE**
- 14. CONTACT THE COMPANY IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS**
 - If you have any questions concerning the work, procedures, opportunities or about the company in general, it is a good idea to ring the company – however only if you cannot find the information elsewhere, for example on the website.
- 15. DO YOUR RESEARCH**
 - If you are sending unsolicited applications, you will want to learn everything you can about the industry and the organizations in which you are interested.

CV

PERSONAL DATA

Name
Address
Phone number
E-mail address
Date of birth

PERSONAL PROFILE

Trained in Economics and Business Administration, I have acquired knowledge with regards to xxx, xxx and xxx. Besides this I have gained valuable experience in relation to xxx, xxx, xxx and xxx during my employment at a consultant company. I am a result oriented person and a team player with aspiration for a job that involves both my professional and personal skills.

EDUCATION

- 2010 - **MSc in Economics and Business Administration – Marketing, Globalization and Communication (cand.merc.), University of Southern Denmark, Odense**
Relevant courses: Brand management, Corporate communication and Marketing & Culture
- 2009 **University of Pourthsmouth, England**
Erasmus Exchange program
Relevant courses: Managing Business Relations, International Trade, Business Research Methods, Innovation Management
- 2007 – 2010 **BSc. in Economics and Business Administration (HA), University of Southern Denmark, Odense**
Relevant courses: International marketing, marketing and culture, management accounting, statistics
BA-project: Market analysis for XX concerning export of the company's product to the German market. The company used the project as part of their export strategy (grade 10).
Referee: NN, phone number

WORK EXPERIENCE

- 2011 **Marketing assistant, Institut for Serviceudvikling (Consultancy Company), Odense**
5 month Internship
- Shared responsibility for developing and carrying out projects within the field of health and employment.
 - Collection of qualitative data
 - Transcription of interviews
 - Information search and set up of databases
- Referee:** NN, phone number

2010-2011 **Shop assistant, XX**

- Contact to costumers
- Cash balancing
- Cleaning up

2009 **Voultear at Danish Red Cross (NGO)**

- English teaching to a group of young Iraqis

2007-2009 **Telemarketing, Market Research Company**

- Advanced to supervisor after one year with responsibility for division of tasks and planning the working schedule for the group of telemarketing employees
- Collection of data through interviews (personal and by phone) and focus groups

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

2007 **Language course and traveling in Latin America (5 months)**

- 2 months intensive language course while living with a family
- 3 months backpacking in Central America, from Costa Rica to Guatemala and Cuba

2006 **Living in Vienna, Austria (4 months)**

- Shop assistant: contact to customers and valuable knowledge of Austrian work culture.
- Courses in painting/drawing and Spanish

LANGUAGE AND IT-SKILLS

Fluent in English, oral as well as written

German native language

Basic knowledge of Spanish

Attending Danish classes at Studie Skolen

Skilled user of various IT programs, such as MS Office (Word, Excel, Power Point) and statistics programs such as SAS and SPSS.

OTHER PERSONAL INFORMATION

In my spare time I enjoy jogging in the parks and within the last year I have participated in various running events here in Denmark and abroad. In May I completed my first half marathon.

Furthermore, I appreciate cooking healthy food, which is made of good and organic ingredients.

That is why cook books take up a lot of the space in my bookshelf. Good crime novels and travel books take up the rest of the space. I enjoy traveling and experiencing new cultures.

PREPARATIONS AND QUESTIONS FOR THE JOB INTERVIEW

No two job interviews are alike; however it is still a good idea to prepare yourself for the situation. Below we have gathered some good advice concerning your personal appearance and the interview. Furthermore, we have listed some questions that are often used in interview situations. You might experience that the questions are rephrased; however the contents are usually the same.

ADVICE CONCERNING PERSONAL APPEARANCE

- Make sure that you keep a natural eye contact with all the interviewers and give a firm handshake.
- Be aware of your personal appearance and dress appropriately so you match the company
- It is okay to be nervous but remember that nervousness can show differently. Some might become very quiet and others might be very chatty. Try to find a balance. It might be a good idea to tell the interviewers if you are a bit nervous.
- If you tend to become very nervous you can practice the interview with a friend or a fellow student. Sometimes the things you prepared saying sounds differently when saying them out loud. However don't memorize your answers; it is important that the interview is like a conversation

ADVICE CONCERNING THE INTERVIEW

- Reflect on your skills and which of them are relevant for the position. Consider which examples that support or show the skills in action.
- Don't ever lie in an interview – you will be revealed.
- You might experience that the interview is quite informal. However be aware that even though the atmosphere might be very informal you are still being evaluated/assessed.
- Often the interview will be conducted by one or two interviewers. Depending on the company you will often meet an HR person and a manager.
- Don't be late for the time scheduled for the interview. Make sure that there is time for unexpected delays. If you do run late, it is important that you call the company and let them know. In some companies being late for the interview might disqualify you for the job.
- In Denmark you address people by their first name – even the CEO and you don't use Mr. or Mrs.
- It is very common that the first few minutes of the interview will be small talking to give you time to be seated and to make you feel comfortable. Often you will be offered something to drink as well.
- Bring your application, CV and maybe a note pad with your questions.
- Research and read about the company so you have a basic knowledge of the organization and the context.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT BE ASKED AT THE JOB INTERVIEW

It is a good idea to consider how you will answer the following questions.

- Please tell us about yourself
- How would your fellow students/friends and family describe you?
- Why did you move to Denmark?
- Which aspects of your studies have you enjoyed most?
- Tell us about your internship/student job experience during your studies
- Why do you find the job interesting?
- What is your key strength?
- What are your development needs?
- What is your role in a typical group work situation?
- Describe a situation you handled successfully
- How do you handle stress? Please give an example
- Why are you the right candidate for this position?
- What are your expectations to this job?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- Is there anything you would like to ask us?

CAREERCENTRE | UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN DENMARK

We have offices in Odense and Sønderborg.
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