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## CVS

### What do you look for when reviewing a CV?

CVs for post-Part 1 positions are normally reviewed by several people, both when they are received and immediately prior to organising interviews in Spring. Sorting the suitable from the unsuitable applicants is made easier if the CV is well presented with clear and concise information. This is an opportunity for someone who provides a CV that clearly stands out from the others in some way to make an immediate impression.

We don't expect applicants to be completely formed architects; we are looking for someone with a willingness to learn who can bring something to the practice, such as:

- clear architectural thinking;
- good visual communication skills;
- something that indicates their passion or self-motivation e.g. an unusual hobby or interest.

In many instances, there will also be someone in the practice who has tutored or reviewed the work of the student, providing knowledge about their strengths and character to support the application.

## PORTFOLIOS

### What would you expect to see on a portfolio?

For post-Part 1 positions, we are looking for projects in the portfolio to demonstrate a legible and coherent architectural approach, presented in a way that shows careful consideration and convincing graphic representations.

A selection of well presented course work should form the core of the portfolio, but it's also good to see that the applicant has allied interests (sketching, photography, building studies etc.) beyond what they are required to produce for University. The portfolio is often a starting point for the discussion at interview, so the applicant should be prepared to talk about what they have included and why.

### Do you prefer digital or hard copy format?

Both digital and hard copy formats are useful for the CV and accompanying

images. The former can be filed easily, whilst the latter is good for quick reference when it first arrives.

### **What should candidates avoid when creating and submitting their portfolios?**

Applicants should avoid sending huge image files that take a long time to download or open. Obscure file formats should also be avoided – the more accessible the information, the more time can be spent reviewing the content.

## **APPLICATIONS**

### **Where do you advertise positions in your company, and do you accept speculative applications?**

We don't normally advertise post-Part 1 positions. Some students will be invited to send in a CV because their work has been seen at reviews; other applications we receive are speculative. There are usually more great candidates than we are able to take without advertising!

## **INTERVIEWS**

### **What sort of questions do you ask at an interview?**

The interview provides an opportunity for both us and the applicant to explore whether we measure up to our initial impressions of each other and if there is a good 'fit' of expectations. This is explored through a relatively informal discussion which includes talking about the projects we and they have worked on, why they have selected the ones in their portfolio and their design rationale.

We are looking for people who have some knowledge about the types of projects that we work on and therefore have some understanding about the sort of work they would be doing if their application was successful. We are looking for people who can make a contribution to the office through their knowledge, skills or enthusiasm for a particular aspect of what we do. We want to understand their short and long-term ambitions, and how we could contribute or share in those ambitions.

### **What can make a candidate stand out at interview, and what can put you off hiring them?**

Ideal candidates demonstrate enthusiasm for what they have done thus far and what they could be doing in the future. We want people who are knowledgeable and skilled, but they also need a willingness to learn.

We recognize that different people have different strengths and that some people may find the interview process difficult, but we want people who demonstrate a mature approach and an aptitude for working within a team.

We would be uneasy if it appeared that the work in a candidate's portfolio was not their own or if they had deliberately tried to mislead us in their CV.

## **AND FINALLY...**

**What are your top tips for students applying for professional experience?**

Research the practice that you are applying to – understand the type of work they do and ensure that it reflects your own ambitions or interests. Think about what you want to get out of your year out and the types of projects that will help you achieve this. For example, some people prefer to work on smaller projects where they might have an opportunity to experience both the design and construction phases; others prefer to work on larger projects where there may be fewer opportunities to have a direct influence on the outcome but it may be a more significant or high profile project.

Think carefully about what you might bring to a practice and how you are able to communicate this. Check that any digital files you provide use standard file formats and can be opened!