

Creating a CV for electives

Your CV is your personal record of your achievements, skills and experiences and is designed to convince the recruiter that you are the right person for that opportunity. See your CV as the opportunity to target your experiences; **the most effective CVs stand out when they clearly identify the way in which they match the criteria for the opportunity.**

Creating a successful CV

Your CV should be viewed as a successful marketing tool and not merely a long list of achievements. To prove that you match the criteria that a recruiter is asking for you must:

- **Analyse the opportunity** and identify exactly what experience and skills are required. Look at the person specification for the opportunity. It is likely to be organized into essential and desirable criteria. You must evidence all of the essential criteria, or you will not proceed through to the next stage, no matter how good your CV looks.

For an elective opportunity, do your research on the organisation and identify any specific skills or experiences that they are looking for. Use their websites or leaflets for additional information.

- **Analyse yourself** and match your achievements, experience and skills to those that are required for this opportunity. These skills can be gained from different aspects of your life, including: **clinical experience, academic study, previous employment and work experience, voluntary work, leisure activities and interests.**

The anatomy of a successful CV

Your CV and covering letter needs to be **Clear Concise Complete Consistent Current**. It should not be an exhaustive list of everything that you have ever done. Whilst there is no set format to your CV the following headings are useful in structuring your information.

- **Personal Details:** Name, address, telephone numbers and email address (avoid jokey sounding ones). Date of birth, nationality and marital status are not necessary for UK CVs. (though you will need this if you are applying for overseas opportunities).
- **Personal Profile/Career Objective:** this is optional, however it's a good opportunity to summarise your key experiences and skills and "make your pitch" from the outset. If you have a particular interest in a specific country or specialty you should also make this clear.
- **Professional Education and Qualifications** Start with the most recent first, including dates and institutions. Focus particularly on your current degree, including academic awards and opportunities to stand out such as SSAs, audits and research.

Remember that they are unlikely to be familiar with how your medical degree is taught and the range of placements you have been on so a good idea is to bullet point the key features of your degree. GCSES need only be summarised.

Professional Experience

Include here clinical experiences; identify whether it was hospital or community based and highlight the key skills gained that the recruiter will be interested in.

Employment and Work Experience This can include permanent, temporary, fulltime, part time and voluntary work (if you have extensive voluntary experience and it is health related you may wish to have this under a separate heading and to prioritise it accordingly). Your experience can be prioritised according to **relevance**, or starting with the most recent first. Ensure that you have identified the key skills gained from these experiences; bullet pointing can work well.

Additional Skills and Achievements This could include IT skills, First Aid, Manual Handling, Basic Life Support, Makaton, British Sign Language, other languages spoken, driving licence, etc.

Interests and Leisure Activities Avoid a long list, but do focus on any membership or positions of responsibility, e.g. MedSoc. They will want to get an idea of what kind of person you are and how you might fit into their team.

References It is usual to include two; an academic as well as someone from a clinical placement. Get their permission first and include their contact details.

Top tips

- Before you start to write your CV, identify exactly what the recruiter is looking for and ensure that your CV clearly provides evidence; if someone picked up your CV would they be able to identify straightaway what you were applying for?
- Aim to keep your CV to 2 pages of A4 (if for an academic position you may wish to attach additional information to a third page)
- Keep the presentation clear; choose a font 11-12 points. Your name can be in slightly larger font. Bold can work well, but try to avoid distracting the reader's eyes with underlining and fussy fonts. Tables can also break the flow of the CV and best avoided.
- Avoid large blocks of text; bullet pointing works well.
- Focus on the positive and use active words to identify skills.
- Use the space well; avoid cramping sections but don't leave too much white space. The average amount time a recruiter first reads a CV is just 20 seconds, so it needs to be easy to read and succinct in its presentation of evidence to match the criteria.
- Check your privacy settings on any social media accounts you have as employers may use Facebook/ LinkedIn etc to research candidates.

Specialist resources

<http://targetjobs.co.uk/medicine-nursing-and-healthcare-graduate-jobs>

www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk

www.prospects.ac.uk

<http://careers.bmj.com/careers/>

Also check **the College of Medical & Dental Sciences page** on our website

www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/careers/mds

Careers Support

Your Careers Network College Team includes:

Jenny Mullins-White Careers Consultant

Dashi Alpion Careers Adviser

Jennifer Edwards Applications Adviser

Kam Manku Senior Internship Officer.

How to contact us:

- You can book an appointment for advice or to get your CV checked via **Careers Connect** at www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/careers
- or email us your careers query online at studenthelp.bham.ac.uk

Careers appointments will take place at Student Services in the Medical School.