Creating a Medical CV

A CV may be required at any part of your medical career; from applying for your elective through to a senior position. 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. You can do this by looking at the person specification for that 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.
  
  If it is for an elective opportunity, look at the information provided; show your research on the opportunity and organisation.

- **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 need to be **Clear Concise Complete Consistent Current**. It does not to be an exhaustive list of everything that you have done but must be designed to show that it is clearly targeted to a specific opportunity. Whilst there is not 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. GMC and MDU numbers may be needed.

**Personal Profile/Career Objective:** this is optional, however is a good opportunity to summarise your key experiences, skills and “make your pitch” from the outset.

**Professional Education and Qualifications** Start with the most recent first, including dates and institutions. Focus particularly on your MBChB, including academic awards and opportunities to stand out, including SSAs, audits and research. GCSES need only be summarised.
Professional Experience
Include here clinical experiences gained as well as your elective; highlight key skills and experiences 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 key skills and experiences are identified; bullet pointing can work well here.

Additional Skills and Achievements This could include IT skills, 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

References It is usual to include two, ideally two senior clinicians. 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 narrative 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.

Academic CVs
These follow the same principles as any other CV, but they are likely to require some extra elements. This section is designed to help those putting together a CV for an academic post to ensure they cover all the relevant information a potential employer will need to see. If you are creating a CV for an Academic Foundation programme it is important to check what information is required for each one. Use the person specification as a guide as well as specific details from each Deanery.

- Research interests - think about how your interests and experience relate to the Academic Programme and how this could be expressed succinctly. This could be identified in a Careers Objective at the start of your CV.
• **Qualifications** - Start with the most recent first e.g. MBChB but you may also have an Intercalated degree or additional qualifications that demonstrate your academic achievements e.g. PhD: title, institution, supervisors’ names, examiners’ names and date. Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees: title, institution, grade achieved and date. Follow on with any other relevant awards, e.g. teaching qualifications, technical qualifications.

• **Publications** – reference fully

• **Presentations** – reference fully

• **Conference Papers Given / sessions organised / sessions chaired** - Check dates, paper titles, conference titles, venues. List conference sessions you have been responsible for organising.

• **Employment / Teaching Experience** - List job titles, employers, dates and the key experiences that might be relevant to the position you’re applying for.

• **Competencies and Skills** – remember to tailor these to the person specification for the academic opportunity.

• **Grants awarded** – details of any funding awards received from internal and external sources, including PhD funding and conference grants.

• **Referees** - List the names, postal addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of two referees who know your academic/clinical work well.

Academic CVs are usually longer than conventional, commercial sector CVs. Their length depends on the number of publications, conference papers or experience etc. you have to include; it is acceptable to attach appendices with more details of research projects, publications etc. (where relevant) and this can bring your CV up to around five sides of A4 paper.

**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/as/employability/careers/college/mds.aspx

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
Dash 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.