

Preparing your medical CV

Whatever the application process used, your CV is an important tool in the recruitment process. Your CV is therefore a really important part of managing your career. On this page you will find details of how to prepare your CV.

There are often conventions for a medical CV so don't be too creative with style and layout.

The purpose of a CV is to present relevant facts in a professional way to a prospective employer. It should make clear why you are the best person for the role you are applying for as well as offer a summary of your career to date. Updating it regularly allows you to tailor the format to each specialty or role you are applying for. Always use positive language and aim for a confident tone.

The following principles will help you to begin preparing your CV and making it relevant to the role.

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Sections to include in a medical CV
 - Personal details: (eg. first name(s), surname, postal address, telephone, email. Also include GMC registration status and number and any visa status if relevant)
 - Career plan and how the job will help you achieve it
 - Medical and other relevant qualifications (include dates, institution and location)
 - Work history (include date, position, employer, location. Also describe skills learnt or developed and most importantly, your achievements in the role)
 - CPD, courses, conferences and training
 - Prizes, scholarships, other relevant achievements
 - Membership of professional organisations (eg royal medical college, MDU, etc)
 - Teaching, presentations, posters (national, regional, local)
 - Clinical audit [1], quality improvement projects and research undertaken
 - Published articles, books and research
 - Additional information - useful skills (eg information technology, languages, etc) that do not fit elsewhere
 - Hobbies, leisure interests and activities, especially where they add relevance and value to the role)
 - Referees - names and contact details of three people including their relationship to you (usually one should be your current educational supervisor)

Always follow any guidance provided as part of the application process as to other potential sections to include in your CV.

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Relevance, order and layout

Relevance

Find out what the post or specialty involves and show how your knowledge, experience and skills are relevant. Your CV should give evidence of your ability to fulfil the requirements of the post, which will be outlined in the person specification for the role.

As well as listing facts, consider adding some context. An example would be for the work history heading, try to distinguish between clinically relevant experience and other important skills. For example, point out the relevance of the non-clinical skills you have acquired – these are often important sections on the person specification which will be tested at interview.

If you are changing specialty, link your previous experience to the knowledge and skills you need for the new discipline.

Order

Based on what you know about the specialty, decide what is most relevant. Using the order detailed in the person specification can often offer a good start. Write dates in reverse chronological order so that the most recent is seen first. The amount of space you allow a topic usually indicates the weight you want the selector to give it. Devote more space if the subject matter is more important. For example, don't take a separate line for each secondary school exam you did and then only one line for your time on the foundation programme if applying for a CT1 or ST1 post.

Layout

Layout should be consistent, with a good balance of text and space. Any hard copies should be printed on high quality paper.

Your CV should be neat and tidy, with all the information easy to find. Use clear formatting and standard fonts.

There are often conventions for a medical CV so don't be too creative with style and layout. Capital lettering and bold print can be used to separate out different sections. Bold print and italics can be useful to highlight important points.

Underlining is best avoided, as it makes text more difficult to read. Be wary of using colours or shaded boxes and backgrounds and don't go overboard with special effects.

Use the tab key rather than the space bar to indent information to create a neat effect. Placing the dates at the left or right hand side, with the rest of the information neatly tabbed, can be an effective way of making the details easy to pick out.

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Attention to detail

Spelling and grammar must be perfect. Check it over carefully, using a UK English spellcheck. If you are unsure, ask a friend or colleague to give you a second opinion. Also, take care with dates. Make sure every year is accounted for and it is clear when you began and ended posts to avoid any unexplained gaps in your employment history.

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Covering letter

Unless otherwise specified, if a CV is required to apply for a post, it will always need a covering letter which introduces you and summarises the main points you hope will attract a potential employer.

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/medical-specialty-training/preparing-your-medical-cv>

Links

[1] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Clinical_audit