

## CaRMS TIPS FOR STUDENTS

# WRITING A CURRICULUM VITAE

## ABOUT THE CURRICULUM VITAE

Curriculum vitae is a Latin expression which can be loosely translated as *the course of my life*. Most often it is shortened to simply CV.

The purpose of a CV is not to tell your entire life's story, but to outline briefly and clearly your competencies, skills and experiences that fit with the area of practice for which you are applying. Ensure that you tailor your CV to the program and specialty.

This information is important to the hiring committee because it will allow them to evaluate your suitability for the area of practice as well as your ability to fit on their team.

### Hybrid CV

A hybrid CV is commonly used to apply to residency programs. This is a combination of an academic CV and a resumé. It includes a relevant work history such as leadership/extracurricular opportunities, community involvement, employment and volunteer work.

The hybrid CV includes demonstration statements to clearly articulate competencies and relevant skills to the reader. While it is longer than a regular resumé, the hybrid CV still does not include everything. Instead, it is an outline of what is relevant and what you want the hiring committee to know.

REMEMBER: every point on the CV is a potential interview question.

## PREPARATION

- Before creating your CV, take an inventory of all your experiences – paid, unpaid, extracurricular, leadership, community, etc.
- Focus on the skills that will transfer to your practice, such as communication, collaboration, problem-solving, relationship building, leadership, advocacy, etc.
- Think about how can you effectively demonstrate your skills and competencies to the reader.
- Consider what experience and qualifications you have that would be considered desirable by the program, such as research, leadership, collaborative partnerships, community-outreach, etc.
- Define your most important achievements and think about how to demonstrate them to the reader
- Think about about what kind of contribution you would make to the program.



## FORMATTING

Your CV should feature a clean, distinct appearance that attracts attention. The final product should be well-organized, professional and easy to read.

**Margins** – set your margins to 2.0 - 2.54 cm (0.78 to 1.0 inch).

**Font** – use a simple and professional font such as Calibri, Garamond or Times New Roman in 11 or 12 point. Choose no more than two fonts; one for headings and one for body copy.

**Style** – limit use of bold, italics, capitalization and bullets.

**Consistency** – demonstrate attention to detail by using consistent style, size and formatting of headings.

**Order of information** – CV entries are organized in reverse chronological order, meaning the most recent experiences and entries come first within each section.

**Dates** – include dates on the right-hand side to focus the reader on the content of your CV.

**Length** – typically, a hybrid CV will be between four and six pages, however, it can be as long as needed to convey the relevant information about your qualifications, skills and experiences. Additional experiences through graduate school and employment may increase it a page or two.

**Header** – include your contact information and page number in the page header. Check “different first page” to allow for subsequent pages with just your name and phone number or email.

**IMPORTANT:** Do not reduce font size, decrease margins or omit important information to shorten it.

## WHAT TO INCLUDE

### Mandatory Items

#### Contact information

Include name, address, telephone and email address. List only one phone number and one email – use the ones that you check most often.

#### Education

Include dates, majors and details of degrees, training and certification.

High school is generally included only for the following reasons:

- You were rurally educated and you are applying to a rural program
- You were educated in a French language school and you are applying to a bilingual pro-gram
- You are from a different city and are applying there; your high school is an anchor in the community

#### Electives

Include all of your electives – even those not yet completed. Present this information in reverse chronological order including dates and timeframes.

You may wish to divide this section into two subsections to highlight relevant electives if they are not scheduled near the end of your electives schedule. (See Sample CV).

## Possible Items to Include

CanMEDS roles provide a good framework when considering what to include on a CV. Focus on the non-cognitive roles:

- Collaborator
- Communicator
- Leader
- Advocacy
- Professionalism

The order of the sections that follow will depend on highlighting relevant experiences and competencies.

## Early Exposures and Shadowing Experiences

Early exposures and shadowing experiences are a great way to demonstrate your interest in an area of practice, or breadth of exposure, as applicable.

## Research

Include past and current research, research assistant positions, thesis and dissertation.

## Publications

Include peer-reviewed, non-peer reviewed, works submitted, works in progress (cite as a work in progress), and reports (it is another way to illustrate your written work, technical articles, etc.). If published online, provide a hyperlink. Format each entry as per medical citation method.

## Presentations/Conferences

List the titles of presentation, author, audience and any other relevant details. Format each entry as per medical citation method.

## Awards / Honours / Distinctions / Recognitions

Include academic awards, fellowships, scholarships, medals and prizes. When deciding what to include, ask yourself “what would I say about this award if asked?” Typically, university entrance and high school awards are not included unless they are unique or prestigious.

## Experience

As with all other items, list experiences in reverse-chronological order within each section. Include statements that demonstrate the transferable skills that you exhibit which are relevant to the area of practice to which you are applying. Therefore, if you are applying to surgery where you want to highlight procedural aptitude as well as teamwork, use those aspects of your previous experiences. If you are applying to family medicine, you want to highlight experiences that demonstrate empathy, establishing rapport, maintaining long-term relationships, etc.

## Employment / Volunteer or Community / Extracurricular or Leadership

The label you provide will be descriptive of your experiences and relevancy to the specialty. The order of the sections is your choice – employment does not have to be the first. If your leadership experience is much more relevant then make that the first section in this part of your CV.

How to make demonstration statements that work:

Position on CV	Not Targeted – lacks relevance	Competency for Specialty	Targeted Demonstration Statements
Program Coordinator, Ellice Neighbourhood Association	Developed cookbook	Teamwork / Multicultural experience	Collaborated with inner-city youth to develop a cookbook which showcased diverse cultures in a meaningful way
Shift Supervisor, Starbucks Coffee	Provided excellent customer service	Leadership	Led teammates, ensuring all staff are aware of responsibilities and clearly communicating feedback to improve store operations
Volunteer, Health Science Centre	Deliver meal trays to hospital patients	Communication / Experience with children and their families	Communicate compassionately with pediatric patients and parents, supporting families in times of extreme stress

## Technical Skills

Only list those that are applicable and relevant to the specialty.

## Professional Memberships

List any professional organizations to which you belong and the years of membership; include any leadership positions you held, if applicable.

## Professional Development / Certification

List any certifications or professional development opportunities that will further demonstrate an interest in the chosen area of practice.

## MD/PhD Students

As you are physician-scientist, your research program is important. However, do not forget the physician competencies that are required for practice. Your CV will be longer than that of most medical students.

## REVIEW YOUR WORK

Carefully proofread your CV for misspellings, incorrect grammar and inaccuracies. Have others review it as well so no details are missed. Have a career consultant from Career Services review a good draft.

## CREDITS

The following resources were reviewed in the in the preparation of this tip guide:

- University of Manitoba Career Services CV workbook, available online:  
<http://umanitoba.ca/student/careerservices/employment/jobapp/index.html>
- University of Saskatchewan Medical School College of Medicine MD Student CV Guide:  
[https://medicine.usask.ca/documents/student-services/wellness/CV\\_Guide.pdf](https://medicine.usask.ca/documents/student-services/wellness/CV_Guide.pdf)
- Royal College of Physicians & Surgeons of Canada – CanMEDS roles:  
<http://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/canmeds/canmeds-framework-e>

## CONTACT US

We welcome feedback. Please let us know if you find this document helpful and if you have tips you would like us to add! Contact us at [studentaffairsmed@umanitoba.ca](mailto:studentaffairsmed@umanitoba.ca).

