

## 2018 Guidance on CV and Cover Letter Writing for the APPEL 4<sup>th</sup> Year Matching Process

The purpose of the APPEL Matching System is to match students to quality placements:

- Which best meet the practice setting and location needs of students.
- In which the best fit possible is achieved between students, their training establishments and their trainers.

With the commencement of the APPEL 4<sup>th</sup> Year Matching Process in March 2018, students will be able to upload their CVs and a Cover Letter to the APPEL Matching System. This will provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate how their experience, interests and achievements would make them a compatible choice for potential placement providers. In this document APPEL provides guidance on how best to develop your APPEL CV and Cover Letter for uploading onto the APPEL Matching System.

### Guidance on writing your CV for the APPEL Matching System

#### APPEL CV Design

At this stage in your pharmacy course, lectures in CV writing skills have been delivered<sup>1</sup> by your School of Pharmacy. It is important that you use the information in these lectures to inform how you develop your CV. A well-presented CV will attract the attention of a placement provider. For example, your APPEL CV should:

- Be well structured and adhere to conventional CV writing format – this includes the recommendation that a photograph is not attached
- Be **no more than two A4 pages** long
- Be simple and easy to read (no jargon)
- Use correct grammar, spelling and punctuation
- Be original and truthful
- Include references

#### APPEL CV Content

The content of a CV is usually targeted to a specific post a candidate is applying for. It is likely that your School of Pharmacy lectures recommend this approach and this is appropriate for summer/weekend/postgraduate job applications.

However, in the case of the APPEL Matching System, students' CVs will be viewed by several placement providers in more than one practice sector. If a student targets their APPEL CV to one specific pharmacy sector only (e.g. hospital) they could run the risk of placement providers in other sectors overlooking their CV. In order to maximise your chances of being selected for interview and/or receiving your preferred placement offers we would suggest developing the content of your APPEL CV to reflect how the experiences you have gained and skills you have acquired make you a good fit for placement organisations in all pharmacy sectors.

The following suggestions may be useful when writing your APPEL CV:

- If you have worked at weekends in a community pharmacy as a member of the healthcare team then you would probably fit in well as a member of a team in a placement organisation. You are likely to adhere to policies and procedures and almost certainly have good communication and listening skills. All

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<sup>1</sup> If not already completed, these lectures will be delivered shortly.

of these skills may make you a good fit for a placement organisation in a hospital/industry/REP setting as well as in a community pharmacy.

- If you have been the Captain of a sports team then you are familiar with motivating people and coaching other players, with setting a positive example and having to think on your feet or under pressure. As the Chairperson of a club or society you have most likely developed planning and organisational skills, gained experience in leadership, decision-making and negotiating. These skills and experiences gained in sports teams, clubs and societies may make you a compatible fit for any organisation in the pharmacy sector.
- If you have waited tables in a café or restaurant you will have experience of working under pressure, dealing with difficult situations/personalities and have learned how to prioritise your workload and how to multitask. These experiences and skills may make you a good match to a busy placement environment.

**REMEMBER:**

**The CV you develop for the APPEL Matching System should aim to ensure that you appear a good match as a placement candidate to all of the various pharmacy sectors (community, hospital, industry, REP).**

## Guidance on writing your Cover Letter for the APPEL Matching System

At this stage in your pharmacy course lectures in Cover Letter writing skills have been delivered<sup>2</sup> by your School of Pharmacy. Again, you may be aware that Cover Letters are usually tailored to a specific post and are used to strengthen the candidate's chance of being selected for interview. However, in the case of the APPEL Matching System, it is possible that your Cover Letter will be viewed by placement providers in different pharmacy sectors (e.g. hospital, REP, etc.) and for this reason a Cover Letter focusing on one particular pharmacy sector only, would be a disadvantage. It is important that any placement provider reading your Cover Letter can sense your enthusiasm and excitement for the placement, that the letter gives them a brief understanding of the type of person you are and that after reading it they feel you would fit well into their team.

The following are some suggestions that may be useful when writing your APPEL Cover Letter:

- Adhere to conventional Cover Letter writing format – this includes the recommendation that a photograph is not attached.
- Keep it short – **maximum one A4** page.
- Do not summarise your CV.
- Use the cover letter as an opportunity to generate enough interest in reading your CV and calling you for interview/offering you a placement.
- It is a chance to explain to the placement provider why you are the best fit for their placement regardless of what sector the placement is in.
- Aim to ensure that your Cover Letter is relevant to the different pharmacy sectors and doesn't focus heavily on one in particular.

**REMEMBER:**

**The Cover Letter you develop for the APPEL Matching System should introduce a little of your personality to the placement provider and demonstrate how you will be the best fit for their placement. Do not try to summarise your CV but to spark their interest in reading it. Aim to keep the cover letter applicable to the various pharmacy sectors rather than focusing on one.**

<sup>2</sup> If not already completed, these lectures will be delivered shortly.