

Edge Hill University

How to apply for a Nursing Post

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Careers Centre

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This booklet has been updated by
Des Hope (March 2011)

Introduction

This guide has been produced by the Careers Centre to help you make high quality effective applications for Nursing posts. It is offered to our nursing students in conjunction with Application & Interview workshops arranged with your tutors within the teaching timetable.

This guide contains information on:

- Completing application forms
- Producing a targeted CV
- Putting together a letter of application
- Addressing person specifications
- Effective marketing of your skills & abilities
- Useful websites for Nursing vacancies
- Contact details of some local trusts

Good luck with your applications!
Jacqui Howe

Making Applications

The whole purpose of completed applications is to achieve an interview. Your aim is to convince the employer that you are worth selecting for interview because you seem to be a suitable candidate for the job concerned, and the sort of person the organisation/Trust likes to employ. The only information which the selectors have about you is that contained in your form or curriculum vitae and the accompanying letter. So, emphasise the positive and let them spot the negative. Convince them that they need to see you. Remember that presentation is as important as content.

If you have an Application Form

Do read through the form first, noting any instructions, eg. Black ink.

Photocopy the form and practise on that form, just in case you make a mistake.

It is important to submit a clear, concise and legible form to the employer.

Check thoroughly for spelling and grammatical errors, including punctuation.

Complete all sections of the form. If a question does not apply to you, write 'N/A'.

Respond to questions as asked, giving details of your interests, activities and achievements as required.

Include previous employment or work experience, paid or unpaid, however unrelated or routine they seem to you.

The skills you have developed in one contact may well be transferable to another and employers will look for evidence that you recognise these skills.
eg

- Dealing with members of the public
- Working under pressure
- Handling money
- Working odd hours

Tailor your responses to the particular post for which you are applying.

Use the 'any other information' section to draw attention to activities and qualities not covered elsewhere on the form. See section later on 'Supporting Applications'.

WHAT A CV DOES

A CV is used to persuade an employer that you are the right person for the job.

A CV isn't always the most appropriate medium to use, as organisations will often require you to complete an application form and covering letter. If this is the case, they are unlikely to also want a CV.

It is important that you present your CV, as professionally as possible and, with this in mind, I would suggest the use of a word processor. Use good quality paper.

Try to keep your CV as succinct as possible, not more than two pages if you can.

What should the CV include?

A CV for a Nursing post would tend to include information under the following headings:-

Personal Details	Name, address, telephone number, date of birth, your NMC registration number once known.
Professional Education	This is your professional Nurse practitioner training. As this is the most relevant qualification for the job for which you are applying, it makes more impact if this comes first. You should include here dates, the Institution(s) at which you studies and the qualification you obtained.
Education	Your education from 11 onwards, including dates, the name of the education institution and qualifications gained there (but not details of your Professional Nurse practitioner training). Begin with your most recent qualifications which are most relevant to what you are applying for.
Professional or Practice Experience	Obviously with the great number of placements you undertake there is no way in which you can detail them all here. Maybe you could include a sentence to explain the wide range of experiences the training has given you and anything

innovative/unusual/relevant you have done as part of your options unit or a placement with similar experiences to that for which you are applying.

Other work experience

Brief details with dates of other types of work experience, skills gained, duties. Try where possible either here or in the covering letter to look for the relevance of any previous work experience to its use in the professional nursing/midwifery situation eg. Counselling skills from a previous job, or involvement in the training of others from being involved in voluntary work previously etc.

Interests and other activities

This section enables the employer to discover a little more about your personality. Other information/additional skills (if appropriate) can be included.

This section can also include special skills or qualification you can offer on top of your other more formal qualifications eg fluency in a foreign language might be very useful in some posts, not as useful in others.

Referees

Two referees need to be included here – one to be an academic/professional referee from the institution where you are about to complete your training. Your second referee should also be someone who can comment on your work and professionalism – many people choose perhaps a Ward Manager/Sister with whom they have worked closely on one of their placements.

Skills Profile

You may decide to include a skills profile. This is where you highlight a few key skills and illustrate them by brief examples. It is best if these reflect some of the skills asked for in the person specification. Some people decide to include a career objective near the beginning of the CV, a short statement describing yourself and your career aims.

Gillian Steele

17, Water Lane
Aintree
Liverpool
L9 4 SH

Tel: 0151 555 5555
Mobile: 077871787178

email: g.steele@btinternet.com

Career Objective

Upon qualification as a nurse, I am eager to undertake a post within the Aintree NHS Trust, having spent successful placements in this trust. I am particularly interested in working within A&E where I spent a very successful elective placement.

Professional Education

**Diploma of Higher Education,
Nursing/ BSc Nursing (Hons)**

**Edge Hill University
September 2010**

- ◇ Gained 70% and above in all theory assessments, including assignments, presentations and exams
- ◇ Produced a poster presentation at a National Student Conference highlighting the value of option placements
- ◇ Produced an impressive personal portfolio

Professional Experience

- ◇ Gained experiences in general medicine, surgical and community. These experiences have developed essential skills such as assessment, implementation and evaluation.
- ◇ Working on Accident and Emergency allowed me to problem solve, assess and prioritise patients' needs and work under pressure. I enjoyed the diverse tasks of nursing in this particular department.
- ◇ Have undertaken a three-week option placement in Australia, which enabled me to compare nursing care and education to that provided in Liverpool
- ◇ Have been involved with several research trials whilst on placement.

Skills and achievements

- ◇ Developed self-awareness and confidence to use my own initiative and work effectively as part of a multi disciplinary team
- ◇ Gained high standards in both theory and practice
- ◇ Developed time management and organisational skills
- ◇ Developed excellent communication skills with the multidisciplinary team, clients and their families
- ◇ Gained clinical skills in the area of rehabilitation and ability to assess patient's needs.

General Education

A levels – Maths, Biology, General Studies	Liverpool 6 th Form Centre 2004
GCSE's – Maths, English, Biology, Geography, History NVQ Level 1 – Business Administration, Pass	Deyes Court, Liverpool 2002

Additional Employment Experience

Senior Care Assistant	Holly Lodge Nursing Home 2005 - 2007
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Working as part of the multi disciplinary team to provide quality care and providing a supporting role for qualified staff. Gave me an insight into the role of the nurse, which influenced my decision to train as a nurse. Responsibilities included, serving meals, liaising with carers and their families, clerical duties.

Administrative Officer	Northern Construction Services 2004 – 2005
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Responsible for providing high standards of customer service, general administrative duties that included dealing with the public and other suppliers. Gained communication skills when working with the public and leadership skills whilst acting as temporary supervisor

Professional Organisations

Student member of the Royal College of Nursing

Interests

Over the last five years I have assisted with a local guide pack and organised meetings in the absence of the leader. I enjoy walking and am a member of Aintree Ramblers Club. I enjoy local history and am also in the process of tracing my family tree.

Referees

Mrs Sue Jones (<i>your tutor's name</i>) Edge Hill University Faculty of Health St Helens Road Ormskirk L39 4QP Tel: 01695 650718	George Brown Senior Nurse Ward 10, Aintree NHS Trust Long Lane Liverpool L10 7SS Tel: 0151 666 9988
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Supporting Information

Try to address your letter to a named person. Ring up and find out to whom it should be addressed if it is not clear. Application forms often include a section for you to include your supporting information. If not, or when sending a CV, you would need to include a separate letter of application. This is extremely important and whereas your CV contains plain factual information, giving relevant details of your experience, your supporting information is your chance to match yourself, your skills, experiences and abilities to the requirements of the nursing post and to persuade the employer that you are exactly what they are seeking.

There is no singular correct way to write a supporting letter. Where possible, make the letter as professional as possible. Remember you are a nurse, a professional person and must market yourself accordingly. Unless you are asked specifically for a handwritten letter, you should always word process letters of application. Where you have to use pen, such as on an application form, make sure it is extremely neat and tidy to demonstrate the care you have taken in completing it.

The following suggestions are just some brief guidelines as to how you might approach a nursing application depending on the information you have received about the post.

In an ideal situation you will receive a job description, person specification, any other additional information about the post/organisation.

In this case make sure that your letter of support or the blank A4 side of an application form, whichever is appropriate for the post, is centred on the JOB OR PERSON SPECIFICATION. The job or person specification will list the qualifications, skills, abilities, and experiences etc that are required for the post. You must therefore take each of these and clearly demonstrate that you have got these skills etc, from your nurse education programme and from other University/or work experience. If you do not meet the essential criteria in the person specification, it is unlikely that you will be called for interview. You must, therefore, clearly state that you have got the necessary skills/experience required and describe how you obtained these skills, experiences, making it as relevant as possible to the post you are applying for. Make sure you make full use of all the other information that you have been sent.

When you have addressed all that is required in the person specification, state clearly any other skills or experience that you feel you can offer and which would make you an asset in the post.

If you get the chance to go on an informal visit, prior to completing your form, try to do so as again you can again pick up clues and information which may help you complete an application/covering letter. Point out also in your information that you did visit as the person who showed you round won't necessarily be the person who sees your form.

Market yourself

State clearly why you are applying for the post, e.g. familiarity with the area, which may mean that you would relate well to clients, their families and carers.

Why you wish particularly to work in a nursing home/accident and emergency Department /particular work you do with a particular client group. You might want to indicate an interest in the particular ethos, or aspects of the organisation that are different. Tell the organisation that you have got what they are looking for and give evidence of that.

Good practice that you have been involved with i.e. experience of nursing in a context that is related to the job for which you are applying.

If you are applying for an area/specialism in which you haven't to date had a lot of job specific experience, think about all the skills and knowledge you have gained that can transfer to that new setting. You might even be able to demonstrate how assignments you have undertaken might link into the job for which you are applying

If you find yourself making any philosophical or theoretical statements ... I believe that ... etc make sure they are backed up by examples of how you have carried it out in practice. Within your philosophy of care, point out that you have worked with and contributed to a wide variety of systems of care delivery.

Look at work experience you have had – including things you have done before your nursing programme as there may well be skills you can bring out of this that are relevant to the post you are seeking – it might be communication skills, team work, management skills. Again try to link this in with any person specifications/job descriptions. One thing to perhaps look at is trying to emphasise your abilities as a leader/manager and your relevant skills in this area as you will be expected to be leaders and managers as soon as you qualify eg I took every opportunity to develop leadership/management skills and go on to give examples of how you did this.

What else can you contribute to the organisation beyond the obvious e.g. you might have done a particularly relevant piece of project work, unique to yourself, have experience of audit, voluntary work, involvement in self-help groups, teaching experience, counselling qualifications or experience, equal opportunities training or initiatives

You might wish to look at your career development plans within the covering letter/supporting information.

Make yourself an interesting, individual candidate.

However, market yourself in a friendly manner. Beware of sounding arrogant or threatening - always support what you say you can do, with evidence. Remember you want to come over as a friendly, caring professional who will be an asset to the organisation.

Example Covering letter

Your Address

Employer Name
Employer Address
Employer reference (if any)

Dear Mr. Mrs. Ms.....(find out name if possible)

I wish to apply for the post ofas advertised in.....

I successfully completed my Nurse training at Edge Hill University.... and am now seeking full-time employment. I enclose a completed application form (or CV) for your attention.

One paragraph on your training/skills/knowledge gained with concrete examples specific to you. Employers want to know about you and your potential ability to develop to do the job in a professional manner. Avoid generalisations and philosophising. Look to the advert and job description for an indication of the particular skills required. What qualities/ experience are they asking for? Take note of key words.

One paragraph on why you are applying for that particular post-even if you are desperate to work for any hospital trust this is the crucial paragraph! What is it that is attractive about the job, the employer, the location? What have you found out about the trust? Do some research.

Optional paragraph and any other information.

I will be available for interviewand look forward to hearing from you.

Yours

Sign your name
PRINT YOUR NAME

NB If the letter began 'Dear Sir/Madam', you should sign off 'Yours faithfully' and if the letter has been directed to an individual by name you should sign off 'Yours sincerely'

General

- The employer wants evidence of skills you can bring to the job
- Don't be afraid to project your personality-make it sound interesting
- Use plain English
- Don't use a standard letter for all applications
- Don't apologise for your self or draw attention to problems

Good luck in your job search and your future career from all at the Careers Centre at Edge Hill. Do not hesitate to contact us if you need any further help regarding your future career plans.

You might want to access our website at:
www.edgehill.ac.uk/careers

You will be contacted by the Careers Centre at Edge Hill around 6 months after completion of your course to find out where you are now nursing or if you are undertaking any further study. Please help us by completing the form and returning it in the pre paid envelope.

Good luck in your job search

Des Hope
Careers Adviser

Nursing Information Websites

Royal college of Nursing	www.rcn.org.uk
NMC's website for nursing and health	www.nmc-uk.org
Health Services Journal	www.hsj.co.uk
Internurse	www.internurse.com
Health Professionals	www.healthprofessionals.com
Portfolio of British Nursing Websites	www.british-nursing.com
Nursing Standard	www.nursing-standard.co.uk
Nursing Times	www.nursingtimes.net
Nurse Practitioners in the UK	www.nursepractitioner.org.uk
Nurse Serve	www.nurserve.co.uk
Priory Healthcare	www.prioryhealthcare.com
World Health Organisation	www.who.int
Save the Children	www.savethechildren.org.uk
Voluntary Service Overseas	www.vso.org.uk
Nursing Council of New Zealand	www.nursingcouncil.org.nz
Brook Advisory	www.brook.org.uk
Marie Stopes International	www.mariestopes.org.uk

Nursing Job Websites

NHS website	www.jobs.nhs.uk
NHS Professionals	www.nhsprofessionals.nhs.uk
Department of Health	www.dh.gov.uk
NHS Careers	www.nhscareers.nhs.uk
Health Services Journal	www.hsj.co.uk

The Guardian Jobs for medical	www.jobs.guardian.co.uk www.jobs4medical.co.uk
Health Professionals	www.healthprofessionals.com
Portfolio of British Nursing Websites	www.british-nursing.com
Nursing Times	www.nursingtimes.net
Nurse Practitioners in the UK	www.nursepractitioner.org.uk
Nurse Serve	www.nurserve.co.uk
British Nursing News on-Line	http://www.bnn-online.co.uk/
NursingNetUK	www.nursingnetuk.com
Priory Healthcare	www.prioryhealthcare.com
Pulse staffing	www.pulsestaffing.co.uk
Nursing Abroad	www.nursingabroad.net
Worldwide Healthcare Exchange	www.pinnacle-international.co.uk
Nursing in Australia	http://www.nursingaustralia.com/ http://www.rcna.org.au/
Canadian Nursing Associations	http://www.cnanurses.ca/CNA/default_e.aspx
Geneva Health International	www.genevahealth.com
Army	www.armyjobs.mod.uk
Royal Navy	www.royalnavy.mod.uk
Brook Advisory	www.brook.org.uk
Marie Stopes International	www.mariestopes.org.uk
Health Jobs UK	www.healthjobsuk.com
British Nursing Association	www.bna.co.uk
Staff Nurse	www.staffnurse.com
Nursing Agency	www.nursing-agencies-list.com
BUPA	www.bupa.co.uk/careers

Nuffield Health Nurses	www.nuffieldhealthcareers.com www.nurses.co.uk
Nursing Net	www.nursingnetuk.com
RCN	www.rcnbulletinjobs.co.uk
Merseyside Nursing	www.jobs-merseyside.co.uk

Nursing Trust Links

Acute

www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories/Pages/AcuteTrustListing.aspx

Primary Care

www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories/Pages/PrimaryCareTrustListing.aspx

All Care

www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories/Pages/CareTrsutListing.aspx

Mental Health

www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories/Pages/MentalHealthTrustListing.aspx

Private Sector/Agencies

A1 Nursing and Homecare Agency Ltd

Toni Coates: 01942 496352, tonicoates@a1nursing.co.uk

Abacus Care

Contact Abacus Care, Ormskirk Business Park, 71-73 New Court Way, Ormskirk, Lancs, L39 2YT, 01695 585405

Advanced Childcare

www.advancedchildcare.co.uk

Allied Healthcare

0800 587799

Alternative Healthcare Group

Gina Patience: Gina.patience@alternativefuturesgroup.org 0151 481 4802

Apex Nursing and Care Services

Lyn Leitch: lyn.leitch@apex-nursing.co.uk

Creative Support Ltd

www.creativesupport.co.uk 0161 236 0829

European Care Group

www.europeancare.co.uk/

Medacs Health Care

www.medacs.com/

Natural Networks

Rachel Lawson: rlawson@naturalnetworks.co.uk

Partnership in Care

Berni Nolan: 01925 400633 www.partnershipsincare.co.uk

Prime Time Recruitment

Philip Bell: philipbell@primetime.co.uk

Service Care Solutions

www.servicecare.org.uk

Windsor Recruitment

Liverpool Branch@ The Property Exchange, 14 Cook Street, Liverpool,
L2 9QU, 0845 6120016, 0151 707 9161

STR Group

www.strgroup.co.uk/healthcare-medical-jobs/

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We would appreciate it if you could complete this form and tell us what you thought of the information we've given you.

Publication title :

Will this publication help you? YES / NO

Did you find the information easy to understand? YES / NO

Was the publication interesting? YES / NO

Did you like the design of the publication? YES / NO

Do you have any other comments about Edge Hill's Careers Centre of the information we've given?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

Please return it to the Careers Centre or email to careers@edgehill.ac.uk

Inclusive Learning

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Edge Hill Careers Centre
Contact Details: Tel: 01695 584866

Website; www.edgehill.ac.uk/careers

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Term-time: Monday – Thursday	9.00 am – 4.45 pm
Friday	9.00 am – 4.00 pm

Vacation periods: Mon – Fri 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
(closed for lunch 12.30 pm – 1.30 pm)