

Guide to Creating a Curriculum Vitae: Key Tips and Recommendations for Junior Students and Researchers in the Health Sciences

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ABSTRACT

The Curriculum Vitae (CV) is a fundamental component of professional development. In a competitive context with limited opportunities (e.g., internships, fellowships, residencies), a well-prepared CV can make the difference in demanding selection processes. However, undergraduate students and earlycareer researchers (e.g., master's students) often face uncertainty about how to structure it and what information to prioritize, as CV preparation is rarely included in formal curricula. The available information can be overwhelming and even contradictory. Moreover, the format and specific requirements may vary depending on the institution and field of specialization. Therefore, this article aims to provide clear and *Guía para crear un Curriculum vitae: consejos y recomendaciones clave para estudiantes e investigadores júnior de Ciencias de la Salud* practical guidelines to optimize the preparation and presentation of a CV, emphasizing elements such as academic background, experiences, skills, and scholarly achievements—particularly for those seeking to engage in clinical research projects or training programs.

Keywords: Professionalism; Competency-Based Education; Researchers; Health Employment; Labor Mobility; Job Application; Medical Education; Professional Competence

RESUMEN

El *Curriculum vitae* (CV) es un elemento fundamental para el desarrollo profesional. En un contexto competitivo por cupos limitados (p. ej., pasantías, becas, residencias), su correcta elaboración puede marcar la diferencia en los exigentes procesos de selección. Sin embargo, estudiantes de grado y jóvenes investigadores (p. ej., maestrandos) tienen dudas sobre cómo estructurarlo y qué información priorizar, ya que con frecuencia la elaboración de un CV no forma parte del programa de estudio. La información disponible puede resultar abrumadora y contradictoria. Además, el formato y los detalles específicos pueden variar según la institución o el campo de especialización. Por ende, el presente artículo pretende

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facilitar pautas claras y prácticas para optimizar su elaboración y presentación, destacando contenidos como formación educativa, experiencias, habilidades y logros académico-científicos, particularmente en quienes buscan involucrarse en proyectos o programas de investigación clínica.

Palabras clave: profesionalismo, educación basada en competencias, investigadores, empleos en Salud, movilidad laboral, solicitud de empleo, educación médica, competencia profesional.

INTRODUCTION

Those who are beginning to engage actively in health research projects without yet having an established track record –such as undergraduate students or junior researchers– often face the challenge of not knowing how best to prepare and structure their curriculum vitae (CV).

This may be due to several reasons. On the one hand, they are usually focused strictly on the formal curriculum (e.g., completing courses, passing exams), without devoting extra time to extracurricular activities (e.g., a research program). In such circumstances, the CV takes center stage due to contests with limited spots and demanding selection processes. On the other hand, very few institutions offer specific workshops on how to prepare a “professional CV,” assuming instead that students will know how to do it on their own—or will simply find a way. But how can one learn something that was never taught?

THE ESIN PROGRAM (Student Researchers)

The Universidad del Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires, through its Department of Research, created the Student Researchers Program (*Programa de EEstudiantes Investigadores ESIN*) to promote and formalize participation in approved research projects (endorsed by one of the institutional ethics committees¹) and under the supervision of experienced researchers with a mentoring track record.

In each call for applications, the supervising researchers specify the number of students they are seeking, the desired profile and requirements (e.g., degree program, year of study), and the tasks they are expected to perform. Candidates then register by submitting their CVs. Finally, individual interviews are conducted, and a resolution is issued. Students are expected to fulfill the agreed-upon commitment in a timely manner, with the possibility of being co-authors of scientific outputs (e.g., conference presentations, publications).¹

In this context, the applicant’s CV is essential, as it serves as their “letter of introduction”². Since the process can be highly competitive, the CV becomes one of the main factors evaluated, and based on this information,

decisions are made about who advances and who does not. However, student CVs often contain common errors. In the future, this could limit their chances of gaining access to valuable professional development opportunities (e.g., residency programs). For this reason, in this article, we set out to provide guidelines and recommendations to support effective preparation.

PARTICULARITIES OF THE CV IN MEDICAL STUDENTS

A CV is essentially a presentation of oneself to a specific audience at a particular point in time. Its construction requires a degree of *flexibility* to allow for adjustments according to the expected “format” (set by the institution, employer, or agency reviewing it), or the expected “content” (e.g., selecting specific or more recent projects), depending on the position being applied for.

It is a *dynamic* and growing document that should be kept up to date in *real time*, or at least on a *regular* basis.³ Its purpose is to reflect academic and professional development over time, making it possible to track one’s progression in terms of education and professional experience².

For medical students⁴, the CV is often indispensable when applying for an external rotation/internship (e.g., an internship abroad), for a scholarship application (e.g., financial support to attend a conference), and/or for residency competitions.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF AN ACADEMIC CV?

In the health field, the focus is primarily on aspects related to education, research, and continuous professional development. It is a “specialized version,” designed specifically to highlight information from the scientific domain, emphasizing skills and competencies (Table 1). It functions as a *professional passport*⁵, as it documents academic achievements (e.g., conferences, publications), opens doors to employment, and creates opportunities for career advancement⁶. Its presentation should be clear and easy to read⁷; visual appeal is not essential, since the content carries greater weight⁸. Nevertheless, consistency in the use of fonts, spacing, bullet points, and other elements is advisable. Legible fonts (size 11 or 12) with standard margins (e.g., 2.5 cm)⁴ are recommended, along with a smart but moderate use of bold and italics. Underlining should be avoided in order to maintain consistency throughout the document.

¹ Comité de Ética de Protocolos de Investigación del Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires (CEPI; Ethics Committee for Research Protocols, Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires) y/o Comité de Ética de Protocolos de Investigación de la Universidad del Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires (CEPIU; University Ethics Committee for Research Protocols, Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires).

Each person may have –or need– more than one version of their CV. Research grants and fellowships often require a shortened version or templates (with a specific structure and length), which means the applicant and supervisor must adapt the CV accordingly. While some calls for applications provide specific designs, others leave more freedom⁹. Regarding length, there is a shortened version (*résumé*) and an extended version (CV), as shown in Table 1.

WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD A CV INCLUDE?

Each section should describe academic, work, and professional responsibilities and achievements, highlighting skills and competencies¹⁰. Figure 1 shows a good structure¹¹ for organizing key content.

Personal Data

Include first and last name(s), email address (e.g., <mailto:firstname.lastname@gmail.com>), ID number (often relevant for institutional forms), phone number (used only exceptionally), and home address (city and country are sufficient, for privacy and security reasons). This provides the basic information needed to contact you and to understand your context (e.g., 4th-year Medical student). It is good practice to include the last update date (dd/mm/yyyy) of the document.

In academia, including a photograph is not an essential requirement (to avoid bias and discrimination), unless specifically requested. However, it is not considered poor practice to include one with a professional style (e.g., white background, a close-up of the face, serious but friendly expression, high-quality resolution, and business-like attire). Other optional content may include gender, nationality, and date of birth. It is also important to include your professional social media (e.g., LinkedIn, ResearchGate, Google Scholar, Twitter)¹², as well as your ORCID ID.

Some people include a short statement on academic interests or professional aspirations³. If a student already knows the specialty they intend to pursue, this adds motivation and strengthens the thematic expertise of their project.

• Education

List educational programs in chronological order. Include institutional details and the date/year when each degree was awarded¹¹. You may also indicate the “status” if not yet completed (e.g., thesis plan in progress). It is important to include every step of your academic path: undergraduate, residency, fellowship, postgraduate, bachelor’s, master’s, and doctorate.

It is useful to list courses, seminars, and workshops attended, specifying provider, location, date, and duration. It helps to note the modality (online, in-person, hybrid) and whether a certificate was granted (attendance and completion certificates weigh differently in a *ranking*). There are open-access, free online platforms offering interesting educational opportunities that issue completion certificates (with an exam), such as the PAHO Virtual Campus for Public Health³³ and the Virtual

Platform of the National Ministry of Health (Argentina¹⁴). There are also free webinars (e.g., sites such as SAGE^V or STAT^{VI}); most are synchronous online sessions and provide a certificate of attendance (without an exam).

• Experience

Allows for the inclusion of a wide range of relevant activities done, such as internships or placements in a specialty, external rotations, volunteer work, teaching (e.g., assistantships), specific programs (e.g., ESIN), and collaborations in research projects. It is recommended to clearly state the role assumed in each project (e.g., sub-investigator, collaborator, data entry) so that the level of responsibility is understood. Good practice also includes specifying the employer/institution, position/function, and dates (beginning and end).

Example:

ESIN Program, UHIBA. Research Collaboration (January 2024 to December 2024).

Internal Medicine Research Area, Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Research on “Dengue 2023-2024.” Tasks:

- Drafting abstract for National Congress X.
- Oral presentation of preliminary results at National Congress X.
- Collaboration in drafting/publishing an article for Journal X.
- Publications

It is advisable to follow reverse chronological order (starting with the most recent publication). Articles should be listed, including title, journal, year, and pages, following the Vancouver style. Whenever possible, DOI, PMID, and URL addresses (for verification) should be provided.

Example: Ibáñez, L. G., Ricasoli, M. C., Blugerman, G. A., Huaier Arriazu, E. F., Sánchez, M., Stanek, V., Martínez, B. J., Pedretti, A. S., Grande Ratti, M. F. (2025). Care of dengue patients in an emergency department during 2023 and 2024. *Evidencia, actualización en la práctica ambulatoria*, 28(1), e007139. <https://doi.org/10.51987/evidencia.v28i2.7139>

• Conferences

Beyond the basic information (name, date, and venue), it is recommended to specify the role performed (e.g., presenter vs. attendee). If the work or participation was noteworthy (e.g., an award or special recognition), it is appropriate to mention this detail.

Example: November 12-14, 2024. Certificate as Author of Work, oral presentation. XXXII SAM Congress 2024: “Dengue Care in the Emergency Department during

¹¹<https://orcid.org/signin>

¹¹<https://campus.paho.org/es>

¹⁴<https://pvs.msal.gov.ar/login/index.php>

^V<https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/sam/how-to-do-research-and-get-published-webinar-series>

^{VI}<https://www.stata.com/training/webinar/>

Table 1. Comparison Between Resume and CV: Shortened and Extended Versions of the Curriculum Vitae

Short Version (Resume)	Extended Version (CV)
Selection of the most relevant achievements you wish to highlight for a particular application, or the most recent ones (limited to the last 2, 3, or 5 years).	Complete list of your achievements, including educational credentials, teaching, and publications.
One page, or a maximum of two pages.	May run to many pages, depending on seniority and experience.
Acts like a cover letter, designed to emphasize the suitability of a candidate for a particular position. ¹⁴	Should be written in the third person, concise, error-free, and well organized. ¹⁵

EDUCATION: academic degrees (undergraduate, postgraduate, bachelor’s, master’s, doctorate) and/or courses (in-person, online, webinars, workshops attended and supported with certificates or proof of completion—may be requested as supporting documentation).

Postgraduate	Master’s in Clinical Research
Institution	Instituto Universitario Escuela de Medicina del Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires
Start date	April 2014
Completion date	Decembre 2015
Status	Completed, Master’s degree. Thesis Defense: 12/04/2017 Approved

- Online course: “Basic training for caregivers of older adults – 2024”. 30 hours. Approved. Universidad Hospital Italiano. Virtual Campus, Argentina. 16/01/2025.
- Online course: “Prevention of self-harm and suicide: empowerment of primary healthcare professionals”. 16 hours. Approved. Pan American Health Organization – Virtual Public Health Campus, 23/01/2025.

Institution	UNTREF (Universidad Nacional Tres de Febrero)
Position	Instructor of extracurricular course: “Epidemiology and Biostatistics: Different Approaches, Strategies, and Funding” Professors: Lic. Carlos G. Guevel, Mg. Karina V. Loiacono, Mg. María F. Grande Ratti, Prof. Jéssica Gamarra, Prof. Gabriela Gualdoni, Prof. Vilma Regule Number of classes: 7. Total hours: 28
Start date	September 2018
Completion data	October 2018

ACHIEVEMENTS: highlight the most important milestones in your academic career or along the path to becoming a researcher, such as scientific publications, conference presentations, symposia, academic awards, fellowships, or distinctions related to research activities..

(continue)

(continuation table 1)

Example:

Title	Prevention, early detection, and postvention of suicide risk: a narrative review Grande Ratti MF, Malleza S, Bertolani FC, FAccioli JL, Valdez D Stefano L, Martínez BJ, Matusевич LD
Journal	Vertex 2025 Jan 10; 35(166, oct-dic.):85-97 PMID: 39836904 DOI: 10.53680/vertex.v35i166.726 Available at: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39836904/
Year	2025

SKILLS: highlight technical (e.g., project, resource, and budget management), analytical (data analysis software, lab techniques, programming), communication (oral presentation of results, languages), organizational (multi-tasking, prioritization), and collaborative skills (use of tools such as Google Drive®, Dropbox®, GitHub®, Zoom®, GoogleMeet®, interdisciplinary teamwork).

Example A: "Developed advanced skills in statistical analysis using R® and Python®, handling large datasets."

Example B: "Statistical analysis with SPSS® and STATA®."

Example C: "Presented research at international conferences and prepared scientific presentations (PowerPoint®, Prezi®, Canva®)."

LANGUAGE	READS	SPEAKS	WRITES	UNDERSTANDS
Englishs	Very well	Well	Well	Very well
Italian	Very well	Very well	Very well	Very well
Spanish	Very well	Very well	Very well	Very well

Competencies: highlight those abilities and attitudes that complement technical and academic skills, and that are essential in a research context.

- Some ideas to reflect on and formulate your own:
- Critical thinking
- Evidence-based medicine
- Problem solving
- Teamwork and interdisciplinarity
- Autonomy and self-management
- Continuous learning capacity
- Adaptability and flexibility
- Professional ethics and responsibility
- Leadership – initiative and proactivity
- Capacity for lifelong learning

Figure 1. Recommended CV structure: key sections and contents

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

MEDICAL STUDENT

ABOUT ME

I am currently in my fifth year of medical school (2025), with a strong interest in clinical research and the application of scientific knowledge to improve healthcare. I am motivated to continue learning through participation in multidisciplinary projects that promote collaboration and teamwork, within a dynamic environment that allows me to strengthen my communication skills and develop critical reading and thinking abilities regarding scientific evidence.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Email: name.lastname@gmail.com

ID: XX.XXX.XXX

ADDRESS: City, Country.

PHONE: (XXX)-XXX-XXXX

ORCID XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-XXXX

Linkedin

linkedin.com/in/tuusuario

X (Twitter)

@tuusuario

EXPERIENCE

Student Researcher Program, UHIBA (January 2024–December 2024)

Research Collaboration, Internal Medicine Research Area, HIBA
Project: "Protocol Title."

Tasks:

- Abstract writing for the National Congress YYY
- Oral presentation of preliminary results at Congress XXX
- Collaboration in drafting/publishing an article for Journal ZZZ

LANGUAGES

Spanish (native) English (FCE - 2019)

EDUCATION

High School Diploma in Social Sciences

2015-2020: Secondary School. XXX.

Medical Degree

2021-Present: Universidad Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires, Argentina.

COURSES

Course on Ethics and Good Research Practices

Health Research Directorate, Ministry of Health and PAHO/WHO, 80 hours. Certificate of completion. 04/01/2024

Virtual Course "Basic Training for Caregivers of Older Adults – 2024"

Completed – 30 hours. Universidad Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires, Virtual Campus, Argentina. 16/01/2025

CONFERENCES

November 12–14, 2024. Certificate as Author, Oral Presentation. XXXII SAM Congress 2024.

"Dengue care in the Emergency Department during 2023–2024: case series, resource use, and innovative care strategies."

M. Ricasoli (*presenter*), A. Sanchez Del Roscio, F. Huaier Arriazu, A. Pedretti, M. de la P. Rodriguez, J. Esteban, V. Stanek, M. Sánchez, G. Blugerman, B. Martínez, M. F. Grande Ratti, G. Ibañez (#21110)

PUBLICATIONS

Ibañez, L. G., Ricasoli, M. C., Blugerman, G. A., Huaier Arriazu, E. F., Sanchez, M., Stanek, V., Martinez, B. J., Pedretti, A. S., & Grande Ratti, M. F. (2025). Dengue care in an emergency department during 2023 and 2024. *Evidencia Actualización en la práctica ambulatoria*, 28(1), e007139. <https://doi.org/10.51987/evidencia.v28i2.7139>

Last updated: dd/mm/yyyy

2023-2024: case series, resource use, and innovative management strategies.” M. Ricasoli (*), A. Sánchez Del Roscio, F. Huaier Arriazu, A. Pedretti, M. de la P. Rodríguez, J. Esteban, V. Stanek, M. Sánchez, G. Blugerman, B. Martínez, M. F. Grande Ratti, G. Ibáñez (#21110). Award for Best Paper.

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS⁷

- Start building the CV as early as possible, using an accepted template. A reference can be requested, or an electronic and interactive format can be followed.

- Keep an extended and dynamic document, using some real-time collection system (e.g., Google Drive®), and include the date of the last update (format dd/mm/yyyy).

- Update the document at least semiannually or annually. This way, in the event of an urgent request to send the CV, the material will be available and ready to use.

- Save each version of the file with the corresponding date, since not all of them may be used in future applications.

- Use a professional writing style, with brief and simple sentences. Focus on highlighting positive aspects. When invited to a job interview, emphasize this reflection on professional development.

- Adapt the content (academic achievements, skills, and experience) and select only what is strictly relevant for the position/application in question. Following a generic format may be inappropriate.

- Ensure that there are no spelling errors and avoid informal email addresses or photographs.

- Meet with mentors and colleagues to review the CV and identify opportunities for improvement. Being open to receiving constructive criticism is advisable.

Author contributions: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Research, Software, Methodology, Project administration, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review and editing (MCR, ASDR, MJB, MFGR).

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