

Overview

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Career planning and development of transferable skills takes time, as does collating the evidence and information needed to support successful CVs and covering letters. This information should include records useful for your future CPD - which is a requirement of professional practice.

You need to get into the habit of collating all relevant information throughout your degree, so you do not forget it, and so that you have resources to draw upon for each application you make for work experience etc.

Just as each job application needs be to specifically tailored so too will your supporting portfolios. So this portfolio suggests a possible framework for creating your own portfolios to track your developments, achievements and experiences to support different job applications, work placements etc and to help you relate theory and practice during your degree.

This portfolio is organised around possible topics for inclusion and offers some key point questions, resources and forms to help you start focussing on your career development and planning. It also includes examples of some of the records you might keep.

If you need help creating, editing and updating your iLearn portfolios, please use the following guides (also available in your iLearn Pharmacy area of Blackboard):

- [Downloading document for use with portfolio.pdf](#)
- [basic portfolio guide.pdf](#) (how to use embedded templates!)
- [advanced portfolio guide.pdf](#) (how to get your own documents etc into your portfolio)

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The following items are useful for preparing and submitting CVs and covering letters generally, and also to help you complete your **PM2ES3 Concepts and Skills** module.

Checklist? Key questions?

What role is your CV aimed at? (i.e. does it suit the industry and employer type?)

What skills and qualities are required for this skill area? Does your CV address these?

If an employer had only 40 seconds to read your CV, what immediate impressions would he/she gain about you? Have you spelt out your unique selling points?

What evidence do you have to support your CV, transferable skills etc? Where is that evidence?

More help

Refer to the notes and handouts on career planning and CV writing etc received during your PM2ES3 Concepts and Skills module

Refer to the [iWork resources](#) section of your iLearn Pharmacy Blackboard area for more general help

Refer to the 'CV' section of [Destinations](#), for help with targetting your CV

Refer to the 'Covering Letters' section of [Destinations](#)

see also the [Sample CV](#) - this is a basic CV, not very exciting, but useful as an example - you can make yours much better!

CVs and Covering Letters

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- A prospective employer needs to know not only what you can do, but what you might potentially be able to do, and why you are different from other applicants, so a CV is not just a list of qualifications and work experiences.
- There are various categories of information in a CV which you may need in different circumstances: for example if you are going for a 'proper' job, or perhaps a vacation volunteering programme, you may want to provide a different profile or emphasise different skills you possess.
- The easiest way to do this is to keep this information on file in its own category so you can select and use it when you need to.
- It is always a good plan to keep this record up to date because it can take up a lot of time to assemble the information - this way you have it at your fingertips!
- iLearn is rather similar in many ways to the way you need to record professional achievements once you are a registered pharmacist, so this is a useful tool for you in several ways.

To help you with recording your CPD, academic and other achievements, use the templates in your iLearn Portfolio OR use these word versions:

- [Education](#)
- [Assessment and feedback](#)
- [Personal Development Record](#)
- [CPD doc](#) [Any other discipline specific ones?]

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This is a way of showing that you are a well-rounded individual, with experience of many aspects of life!

Some posts need more than just a basic qualification, so adding something about your achievements in spheres outside your chosen profession can help an employer to see you as an interesting person - even before they meet you.

An unusual hobby can even provide an opening for a discussion in an interview (so it is wise to be fairly truthful here.....!).

You can use your own documents, but may also use the templates in your iLearn Portfolio (accessed via iLearn Pharmacy). Alternatively, you can use these word versions of the iLearn templates

- [Activities and Interests](#)
- [Community service and voluntary work](#)

Activities and Interests

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Work experience in general is important to show that you are able to hold a job, and that you understand the demands and responsibilities of the workplace.

Directly relevant, specialised or professional work - in our case, Pharmacy - is very important, but should be considered in a slightly different category to your experience of what you might even consider to be 'menial' work, for example some holiday jobs.

However in a profession where you meet people from all walks of life, to be able to understand their lives and concerns, and thus communicate with them, is a valuable skill. So it is worth expending effort to document the skills you have learned in this area.

You can use your own documents, but may also use the templates in your iLearn Portfolio (accessed via iLearn Pharmacy). Alternatively, you can use these word versions of the iLearn templates

- [Community Service and Voluntary work](#)
- [work experience](#)
- [transferable skills](#)

Work Experience etc

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Work experience is one of the determining factors in being offered a job in some sectors - particularly those which are over-subscribed. Whether or not the work was paid is less important than what you learned from it!

Your experience shows not only your knowledge of the subject, but also your commitment to your chosen profession - and perhaps the community at large.

Therefore it is worth spending some time in documenting the things that you have done in this area.

You can use your own documents, but may also use the templates in your iLearn Portfolio (accessed via iLearn Pharmacy). Alternatively, you can use this word document which is modeled on the type of CPD records you will be expected to complete once you qualify.

- [cpd.doc](#)

Remember to look at the various resources on finding relevant work experience in the iWork area of your iLearn Pharmacy area on Blackboard.

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Reflective practice is a way of evaluating what you have learned - and more importantly, what you need to learn.

It is done from your own point of view - because you know better than anyone what your strengths and weaknesses are.

Reflective practice, and making plans for increasing your knowledge and experience - so you become accustomed to keeping up to date with all developments in your own field and related areas - are requirements of CPD (Continuous Professional Development). CPD is an integral part of any profession, including Pharmacy - would you want to be treated by someone who didn't know the latest developments in medicine?!

- We suggest that you create word versions of the various opportunities you have had to reflect on your pharmacy practice in Year 1 and 3 and put them in your portfolio. Or at least key point summaries from these. If you are using a blogging tool you can also link to that from here...
- these forms may also be useful:
 - [cpd.doc](#)
 - [Personal Development Record](#)
 - [Strengths and areas for development](#)

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It is vitally important that you conduct research on the company or organisation that you may wish to apply to for employment. At the end of any interview session, there is always the question '...and what would you like to ask us?!'

If you do not know anything about the company, and if you do not ask anything of them, they will assume you are not very interested in them - and will be unlikely to view your application very favourably.

For some examples, see the various opportunities listed in the iWork area of your iLearn Pharmacy area on Blackboard.

You could collate this information - including useful websites perhaps - in a separate portfolio so that you have a useful resource to draw upon, tailor and summarise for any application.

You could also use this document: [referees.doc](#)

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You should consider collating any documents, contact details or links to various useful resources you have found and used in support of job applications/ placements/ other work experience.

To get you started, consider the resources listed under [iWork](#) in your iLearn Pharmacy area on Blackboard and make a note of the ones you like, find most useful etc. Also add other ones you come across - for example websites, organisation email addresses, and even people you know in certain field of work who may be able (and prepared) to advise you.

There are no templates or examples here, because this is a very personal resource which may not apply to anyone else at all!

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- Have you tailored your CV and covering letter?
- What are your unique selling points?
- Are these in your cv?
- What evidence is there to support your CV, transferable skills, selling points?
- Is that evidence in this portfolio? in the covering letter?

What other help or preparation do you need?

- *Preparing for interviews ...*
- *Reflecting after an event ...*
- *Your thoughts.....?*

Portfolio Checklist