



GRADUATE NURSE / MIDWIFE APPLICATION GUIDE.

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Graduate Nurse / Midwife Application Guide.

One of the most crucial aspects of applying for a nurse or midwife position is the preparation of your application. This step is essential as it serves as the first impression potential employers will have of you. Taking the time to carefully craft and tailor your application to the specific job requirements can significantly increase your chances of landing an interview and ultimately securing the position. This eBook is your companion as you begin the transition from student to professional, offering insights, guidance, and encouragement to help you navigate the recruitment process with confidence.

GETTING STARTED

Proper application preparation involves researching the healthcare facility you are applying to, understanding their values, mission, and culture. This information will help you align your skills and experiences with what the employer is looking for. Additionally, ensuring that your resume, cover letter, and any other required documents are error-free and well-written is crucial to making a positive impression on hiring managers.

By dedicating time and effort to preparing your application, you demonstrate your commitment to the profession and your suitability for the role. Ultimately, a well-prepared application can set you apart from other candidates and help you stand out in a competitive job market.

The first step to a successful process is to decide where you want to work and how to apply using the correct process. Many states have specific portals or sites for graduates to apply through and many of them also have time frames in which you can do so.

So lets have a look at the different states around Australia and how you can apply in each.



Australian Graduate Nurse / Midwifery Programs

Each state in Australia has their own portal or process in which graduate nurses and midwives can apply for a position. Listed below are the links to each state's portal or process. Depending on the state you wish to apply for will depend on the complete requirements of the application as well as the time frames available. Your university / education provider should be able to provide you with information regarding when positions are open for application within your desired state. If you are looking to apply outside of the state that you currently live in it is a good idea to do some research now and make sure you don't miss any timeframes that are set for graduate recruitment within your chosen state. The graduate nurse / midwifery programs are competitive and you want to make sure to complete all requirements of the application process within the set timeframes to ensure you don't miss out on the position you would like.

- QLD Registered Nursing and Midwifery Graduate program - Graduate Portal [Registered Nursing and Midwifery Graduate Program | Careers \(health.qld.gov.au\)](https://health.qld.gov.au/careers/graduate-program)
- NSW Health GradStart portal [2025 GradStart Handbook - Careers in nursing and midwifery \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://nsw.gov.au/health/graduate-program)
- Victoria Graduate Nursing and Midwifery Program [Home - Graduate Nurse Midwifery Program \(pmcv.com.au\)](https://pmcv.com.au/graduate-program)
- WA Health GradConnect [GradConnect \(health.wa.gov.au\)](https://health.wa.gov.au/graduate-program)
- SA Health [Graduate or entry level jobseeker | SA Health](https://sa.gov.au/graduate-program)
- ACT Health's CHS online career portal <https://acthealth.taleo.net/careersection/external/jobsearch.ftl?lang=en>
- Tasmania's transition to practice for Registered Nurses [Transition to practice for registered nurses | Tasmanian Department of Health](https://tas.gov.au/transition-to-practice)
- Northern Territory NT Health's Graduate Program [Graduate programs | NT Health](https://nt.gov.au/graduate-program)

CHOOSING YOUR SPECIALTY

When you are applying for any role in health care you need to make sure your application matches the role you are applying for. There are many transferable skills that will relate to every specialty in nursing but there are those that different specialties will look out for when shortlisting their graduate candidates. You need to make sure that when you develop your CV and application, that it is written in response to the job you want with the right skills and attributes highlighted.

Perhaps you have already fallen in love with a specialty and were even lucky enough to have a clinical placement in your chosen specialty. If that's the case, then you are half way there as you will be able to use your experience while on placement to highlight the type of skills you might need for your chosen specialty that you can ensure are listed on your CV. For example, if you prefer paediatrics, then the ability to communicate with children is a key skill that you should ensure is listed on your CV.

If this isn't you and you still aren't sure what specialty you want to work in, don't worry here are a few tips on how you can work out where your heart may lie.

Here are some questions to ask yourself to help guide where you might enjoy working most:

- When studying, what type of areas interested me the most?
- Do I enjoy fast paced environments or more controlled organised environments?
- Do I enjoy connecting with new people or do I prefer to build relationships with others over periods of time?
- Do I find it easy to form relationships with children?
- Do I enjoy the unexpected?
- Do I enjoy the complete patient journey, caring for the same patients and forming relationships with them over long periods?

These are just a few of the questions you can ask yourself when searching for your ideal specialty. However, it's important to remember that nursing is a diverse career, and you will have plenty of opportunities throughout your career to move on and try new things. Just because you start somewhere that doesn't mean your career will always be in that area. Take the leap, try out new areas and find your passion.

WHAT ARE EMPLOYERS LOOKING FOR?



Whenever you apply for any position in nursing you need to be sure you highlight the areas that recruiters are using to shortlist applications.

Graduate positions are generally shortlisted using the following type of criteria:

- The content and standard of your cover letter (don't worry we'll go through this later)
- Placement areas and skills developed while on placement
- Your skills and attributes
- Your values and how they align to the organisation
- Academic results / GPA (not all recruiters will use this, but some will)
- References

Each of these components need to be highlighted in your CV and application. So, let's break it down and start building your application.

CV PREPARATION

Your CV is your first point of contact with a potential employer. You use it to show your prospective employer why they should hire you and what you have to bring to the team. Spending time and energy on your CV is the first step in getting you where you want to be in your career. Your CV is your opportunity to demonstrate skills like attention to detail and to create a positive first impression. An accurate CV builds your credibility and creates trust by demonstrating honesty and integrity.

There are lots of available resources for preparing resume and CV's out there, but we will be focusing specifically on nursing and how you can prep your CV so that it gives you an edge when applying for competitive graduate nurse / midwife positions.

Let's start with a couple of do's and don'ts:

DO

- Keep it brief and to the point
- Use bullet points
- Use a profile statement that summarizes you
- Be specific about your skills
- Use information relevant to the position you are applying for
- Make it easy for the information to be found
- Use examples that align with the job you're applying for
- Use a template

DON'T

- Waffle
- Use photo's
- Add information from every job you have ever had
- Use generic information
- Lie
- Go over 2 pages in length



PERSONAL STATEMENTS

Your professional statement is about you as a person and it's your chance to grab the recruiters attention. It needs to give them an idea of your personal qualities but also about your professional skill level.

This needs to be the first component of your CV and can be one of the most important aspects of your CV.

This needs to be a short statement and needs to give the recruiter an immediate impression of you as a professional.

Tips for a great personal statement:

- Don't be vague or non-specific
- Include your personal qualities
- Include skills that make you stand out

Here is an example of a good personal statement (***This is not for you to copy but to give you an idea of the type of information that should be included in your personal statement***).

Example:

Passionate and patient-oriented nursing student with clinical experience studying to be a registered nurse and seeking immediate opportunities to work in the healthcare environment. Eager and dedicated problem solver looking to leverage impressive interpersonal skills and proven track record in maintaining patient relationships to support collaborative teamwork in a clinical setting.

Why is this a good statement?

- ① **Specific:** They have told the recruiter exactly what they want - *“studying to be a registered nurse and seeking immediate opportunities to work in the healthcare environment”*
- ② **Personal Qualities:** These are clearly described *“Eager and dedicated problem solver...” “Impressive interpersonal skills”*.
- ③ **Skill set:** they have succulently provided any overview of some of their standout skills *“proven track record in maintaining patient relationships to support collaborative team work”*

Now it's your turn. Try writing your own personal statement.

Jane Doe
Registered Nurse

Make sure your contact details are correct
Make sure email handle is professionally appropriate

+123-456-7890 📞
hello@professionallyappropriate.com ✉️
123 Anywhere St, Any City 📍

About Me/Profile Statement
this your section to give a brief overview of your personal qualities and your professional skills.
Be specific: include your personal qualities e.g. enthusiastic/driven; your professional skillset e.g. advances clinical specialist and a brief statement of why you are perfect for the job.

EMPLOYMENT AND STUDENT PLACEMENT HISTORY

Employment history should be in reverse chronological order and detail your overall role and some specifics about what you achieved in that role. They should be specific to you as a person and not about the unit itself.

Below are some samples for a suggested structure.

EXAMPLE 1

September 2019 – Present

Assistant in Nursing – Unit ABC - ABC Hospital

- Primary role in activities of daily living for patients
- Available to work all shifts in the roster

Key achievements in the role:

- Achieved Basic Life Support Competency
- Involved with Comprehensive Care Audit in 2022
- Quality Improvement Initiative - Pressure Injury Prevention “turn team” (can provide more information if required).
- Unit level health and safety representative

If you don't have direct healthcare related employment history, then the key achievements and responsibilities of the roles you have undertaken need to display the type of skills and attributes that are transferable to nursing / midwifery.

EXAMPLE 2

January 2020 - 2023 Store Assistant - Kmart

- Primary role in customer service delivery
- Available to work all shifts in the roster

Key achievements in the role:

- Team leader in click and collect division
- Employee of the month x 6 times

This Section should make up the bulk of your CV No more than half a page per-role

Work Experience

2021 - 2024
3 years
Assistant in Nursing | Unit ABC, ABC Hospital.

- Use bullet points to detail your key responsibilities
- No more than half a page per Role
- List added extras such as quality activities
- List awards achieved

2015 - 2021
6 years
Administration Officer | CDE Accounting

- Be specific
- List any portfolios you held
- List any compliments received
- Any specialist skills that were required
- Use examples to elevate your statements

This Section should be in reverse chronological order

Student Placements

3rd year
Nursing Student | Unit ABC, ABC Hospital.

- Use bullet points to detail your key responsibilities or achievements during this placement

2nd year
Nursing Student | Unit ABC, ABC Hospital.

- Only list skills that are specific to an area not general skills such as assisting with basic patient care

1st year
Nursing Student | Unit ABC, ABC Hospital.

- Be specific and keep it short.

Student Placement History

Your student placement history should also be in reverse chronological order and detail your overall role and some specifics about what you achieved in those placements. Given it is out of the control of the student what placement opportunities they are provided, this is often not a determining factor when recruiters are shortlisting, however if you can demonstrate you were able to complete over and above the requirements of the placement or even some of the skills that are transferable to other units then its important to display these on your CV.

EDUCATION

Education (enrolled and completed)

In a graduate application, it is best to place your academic qualifications, especially your tertiary education, at the top of your CV, following your personal statement. While this may seem obvious for a graduate role and possibly unnecessary, omitting this information may lead to the assumption that you are not currently enrolled or have not completed your education. It is surprising how frequently this crucial detail is overlooked. All enrolments that are yet to be completed should also outline your estimated date of completion.

In addition to your Bachelor of Nursing Education any other relevant tertiary education should be added, particularly if you are enrolled in any vertical post graduate degrees and ensure you also list the estimated completion date. Listing vertical degree enrollments on your CV is crucial as it demonstrates your dedication to the specialty through ongoing education in the field.

Much like your employment history, which we covered in the previous section, your education should also be in reverse chronological order with the most recent listed first.

Most recruiters don't require your level of distinction for tertiary qualifications, however if you achieved high levels this may show the recruiter your commitment to your development.

Some recruiters will want to know your GPA so this should also be listed on your CV. However, in saying that, high academic achievements / skills don't always translate to high performing clinicians and may or may not be considered when recruiters are shortlisting applicants. There is a large amount of health services that don't consider GPA when shortlisting, however some do.

Most recruiters aren't interested in your primary and secondary school education so there is no need to include this, and it will only take up valuable space given your entire CV should not exceed 2 - 3 pages.



This Section should be in reverse chronological order

Education

2022-2024 Bachelor of Nursing – Enrolled* (finishing Dec 2024)

- Just one line about the university is sufficient e.g., ACU
- *if enrolled, mark your estimated date of completion
- you can add your mark received if you wish but it is not required

Clinical Awards/accreditations/Professional Development Learning (PDL)

This section includes clinical courses e.g. BLS / PLS etc as well as any personal awards such as rising star awards etc.

Ensure you only list ones that are relevant for nursing positions in this section.

Don't use others that may polarise the recruiter but that relate to your personal interest like “psychic accreditation”, “most beers drank in 10mins awards” etc.

Don't use clinical abbreviations.



Clinical Skills/PDL

- competent basic life support
- Central Venous Access Device
- Competent
- Intra Venous Cannulation
- Competent Advanced Life Support
- Competent

KEY SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

This section is a list of your personal skills and attributes and can often be difficult for a lot of people to list as this is the part where you need to be able to sell yourself. Therefore for this section you need to be confident about what you have to offer. These are your core skills and personality traits that you want to demonstrate separately to your role's achievements. They are the skills that you bring to the table regardless of what role you are applying for. This transferable skillset.

Key Skills/Attributes

- Core Skills (not clinical)
- personality traits that you want to highlight
- Transferrable qualities
 - Excellent time management skills
 - Patient focused
 - Adaptable
 - Logical problem solver
 - Advanced interpersonal skills

These skills should be re-inforced in your letter

Awards

ABC Hospital
The Nurse of the Year

ACTIVITY

1. Have a go at jotting down 20 things you bring to the table - If you can think of a time when you have displayed each of these skills / attributes this will assist you in owning that trait.
2. Now prioritize these in order of importance.
3. Once you have 20, start eliminating traits one at a time until you reach your top 10. These will go on your CV.
4. Now work on expanding and elaborating your top 10 so that you have the perfect list for your CV.

REFEREES

You need to list at least 2 referees on your CV. If you have more, then you can make a note on the CV such as ****further referees available on request****.

It's crucial to seek permission from your chosen referees to confirm their willingness to provide a reference. This is important for several reasons, including ensuring they can offer positive endorsement. Additionally, recruiters often request referee reports before interviewing candidates, so it's essential to keep your referees informed to prevent any awkwardness or offense.

For your graduate position, it's crucial to have referees within healthcare. The best choices include:

- If you're employed in healthcare, such as an AIN, then your line manager is essential. Not listing your line manager can be a red flag for recruiters, who may suspect an issue and will likely request your line manager's details.
- If you're not employed in healthcare, the best referees would be from your student placements, especially those working in the field you're applying to. It's advisable to consider this during your placements so you don't miss the chance to ask.

Ensure you have accurate details for your referee and use their business contact information rather than personal details, unless they have explicitly given them to you for this purpose. Many individuals prefer not to be contacted on their private lines for work-related matters. If your referee is someone you know personally and you already possess their private contact information, it's best to confirm with them which details they would prefer to have listed.

Always seek permission before listing a referee.

References	
Name Surname	Name Surname
Job position, Company Name	Job position, Company Name
Phone: +123-456-7890	Phone: +123-456-7890
Email: hello@reallygreatsite.com	Email: hello@reallygreatsite.com

Now let's put it all together and build your CV. Using the example below as well as what you have learnt about each of the sections to draft your CV.

For an easy-to-use template to use, we recommend canva.com.au. They have plenty of templates to choose from and you can create an account for free.

Jane Doe

Registered Nurse

About Me/Profile Statement
 this your section to give a brief overview of your personal qualities and your professional skills. Be specific: include your personal qualities e.g. enthusiastic/driven; your professional skillset e.g., advances clinical specialist and a brief statement of why you are perfect for the job.

Make sure your contact details are correct
Make sure email handle is professionally appropriate

+123-456-7890

hello@professionallyappropriate.com

123 Anywhere St., Any City

This 1-page example of CV sections and content should be elaborated to be approx.2 pages long.

- The sections can be moved around as you see fit.

These sections represent the minimum content required.

Don't use clinical abbreviations.

Education

This Section should be in reverse chronological order

2022-2024 Bachelor of Nursing – Enrolled* (finishing Dec 2024)

- Just one line about the university is sufficient e.g., ACU
- *if enrolled, mark your estimated date of completion
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Work Experience

This Section should make up the bulk of your CV No more than half a page per-role

2021 – 2024 Assistant in Nursing| Unit ABC, ABC Hospital.
3 years

- Use bullet points to detail your key responsibilities
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- List added extras such as quality activities
- List awards achieved

2015 – 2021 Administration Officer | CDE Accounting
6 years

- Be specific
- List any portfolio's you held
- List any compliments received
- Any specialist skills that were required
- Use examples to elevate your statements

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This Section should be in reverse chronological order

3rd year Nursing Student | Unit ABC, ABC Hospital.

- Use bullet points to detail your key responsibilities or achievements during this placement

2nd year Nursing Student | Unit ABC, ABC Hospital.

- Only list skills that are specific to an area not general skills such as assisting with basic patient care

1st year Nursing Student | Unit ABC, ABC Hospital.

- Be specific and keep it short.

Always seek permission before listing a referee.

References

Name Surname	Name Surname
Job position, Company Name	Job position, Company Name
Phone: +123-456-7890	Phone: +123-456-7890
Email :hello@reallygreatsite.com	Email :hello@reallygreatsite.com

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Key Skills/Attributes

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- Transferrable qualities**
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- Adaptable
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- Advanced interpersonal skills

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Awards

ABC Hospital
The Nurse of the Year

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COVER LETTER PREPARATION

An effective cover letter and application response to criteria can be a tipping factor for your application. An effective cover letter and/or criteria response should be customized for the position you are applying for, should be concise and to the point and should paint a clear picture of your skills and abilities with reference to the job that you are applying for. A strong application response can be the difference between getting an interview and not getting an interview.

So, let's have a look at how to structure a strong cover letter for your application.

Professional letter structure

Ensuring that your cover letter is structured professionally is crucial to demonstrate to recruiters your professionalism and effective written communication skills.

So, let's break down the different parts of a professional letter structure.

1. Header - Write the recipient's name, title and address (this would be the hospital). Make sure to spell it right! Spelling a recruiter's name wrong is offensive and a quick way to be placed in the "no" pile, particularly if the recruiter has a large number of applications (which is often the case with graduate positions).
2. Salutation - In a professional letter structure, the standard salutation is "Dear." Begin your letter with "Dear [recipients' full name]" and a comma following their name. You may choose to address them with an honorific such as Ms, Mrs, Mr, Dr prior to their full name.
3. Body - The body paragraphs take up the bulk of the letter and can be broken down into 3 parts:
 1. An introductory paragraph that states the letter purpose and introduces the author
 2. One or more middle paragraphs that discuss the main content of your letter, in this case is your relevant experience etc.
 3. A final paragraph that restates the letter's purpose and offers thanks such as *"thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you"*
4. Closing - the close of the letter should be simple and professional. Sign offs such as the following are acceptable:
 1. Sincerely
 2. Kind Regards
 3. Respectfully
5. Signature - Always sign the letter and place your full name and title, such as *"Jane Doe, Student Nurse"*

COVER LETTER

Your cover letter must be well-crafted, showcasing your excellent communication skills and summarizing why you are the ideal candidate. It should enhance your CV, and if a written response to selection criteria is requested by the health service, it should align with that as well. *Note that while a written response to criteria is commonly required for healthcare positions, it is not always necessary for graduate roles; hence, our program will concentrate on your cover letter.*

Here are some general tips for the body of your cover letter:

- Start with a short but strong introductory paragraph. This should introduce them to you with a brief sentence as to why you are the perfect candidate, much like the introduction to an assignment (only much shorter).
- Your main paragraphs should highlight your
 - skills
 - Experience (including examples)
 - Accomplishments
 - Goals
- You should detail how you align with the organisation and their values. This is where good research into the organisation you are applying for comes in very useful.
- Highlight your personal value. These are the qualities you need to convey in your letter that go beyond your clinical skills—the “other” attributes you offer that managers seek in candidates for any job. Hiring managers are on the lookout for problem solvers and individuals with a “can do” attitude, which are often more important than teachable technical skills. Use relevant examples to illustrate this e.g. health has been affected by the pandemic, what do you bring to the table in that regard e.g. commitment, resilience etc. Your CV showcases your clinical capabilities; now is the opportunity to highlight your additional skills and personal attributes that complement those clinical skills. Below is a list of non-clinical skills that hiring managers seek:

- Adaptability
- A willingness to learn new skills
- Problem solving ability
- Enthusiasm
- Authenticity
- Maturity (in attitude not age)
- Professionalism

- Use examples to move your claims from hypothetical to actual. Anyone can write “I am a great communicator”. To make this point valid use an example of how you achieve this.
- Pay attention to formatting including font and paragraph spacing
- Don't forget to thank the recruiter for their time and consideration
- Pay attention to the file name you have saved it under e.g. Muir's letter 5 probably isn't as professional as M.WYNEE Cover Letter RN ABC Hospital

Here is an example of how to structure your application letter. Now have a go at drafting your own cover letter.

Jane Doe
Registered Nurse

- **Keep the formatting/design the same as your CV. It creates a stronger sense of identity**
- **Be careful of colour choice. Colour can be polarising**

hello@professionallyappropriate.com
+123-456-7890
123 Anywhere St., Any City

Name, Title and Address of the recipient above the salutation

John Smith
Nurse Unit Manager
Emergency Department
ABC Hospital, State, 4111

Always address to a specific person if you can, if not, to the unit that you are applying for
Make sure to spell their name right

Dear Specific Hiring Manager's Name,

Start with a short introductory paragraph about you, why you want the job in that specific unit. Why are you perfect for the role? Keep this paragraph brief.

Then lead into the main bulk of the response. For public organisations they will usually ask you to respond to a set of criteria e.g. key accountabilities or values. Use the headings they give you. e.g.

Leadership: Emphasise your personal value in these sections.

- Use bullet points to stick to key points (will stop you going off on a tangent)
- Specifically look at what they want you to address under these accountabilities and don't steer from this

Clinical Accumen:

- List here how you meet their desired clinical skill set
- Be specific about you.

Don't forget to emphasise:

- **Adaptability**
- **Problem solving**
- **Enthusiasm**
- **Authenticity**
- **Maturity**
- **Professionalism**

Keep going until all headings are covered:

- Use examples to illustrate your points

This is also the place to present other relevant information about your characteristics or background that may not be evident from your CV. You might provide the employer with some specific examples of how you've demonstrated particular key skills or how you fulfill the most important qualifications listed in the job announcement.

Don't be afraid to focus a paragraph on the future. e.g. post pandemic healthcare challenges. How can you help? e.g. loyal, committed to growth, education etc.

The last paragraph is important. Always express your wish for feedback. Demonstrate your willingness to appear personally for interview. If an earlier starting date is also possible for you, this is a plus point that you could attach at the end. Finally, always thank the employer for considering your application.

After you've given your letter a final polish, ask a friend or colleague with a strong eye for typos and good grammar, punctuation, and spelling skills to review it. Include a copy of the job posting to make sure you've hit all the right points. Good luck!

Yours Sincerely,

Jane Doe
Jane Doe
Student Nurse

Don't forget to sign the letter
Don't forget to stick to their requested limit (usually 2 pages)
PDF is usually the preferable format.

Your journey from student to professional nurse or midwife is an exciting and transformative time. By approaching your job application with intention, clarity, and a commitment to showcasing your unique strengths, you set the foundation for a successful career. Let this guide be a trusted resource as you take these important first steps—arming you with the knowledge, tools, and confidence to present your best self and embrace the opportunities ahead. Your future in healthcare starts here, and we're cheering you on every step of the way.

