

# Resume Writing – Health

## Allie's story

*I found it more difficult to put my resume together than I expected, because I hadn't **updated** it since school and I wasn't sure how much information to put in and **what I could leave out**. Using Resume Builder via QUT Virtual helped me get organised and reminded me of some headings that I could use. It also made me realise that I've done more than I thought I had. I showed it to my mentor and one of my lecturers and got feedback from Careers & Employment. It's not perfect but I know there's **no "one right way"** to do a resume. It's a work in progress, and it will change as I get more skills and experience, and as I target different jobs.*

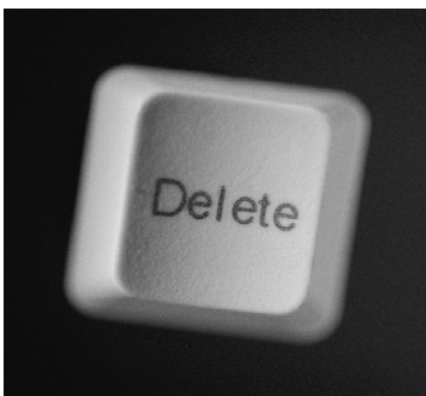


Your resume should be a concise document of your **relevant** education, skills and experiences, and should **target the specific position** you are applying for or the organisation you are sending it to.

The aim of your resume, application letter and other “paperwork” (i.e. your application could be hard copy or could be electronic, depending on what the employer requests) is to **interest the employer in what you are offering**, so that you are invited to an interview to provide more information.

Take a look at Allie's resume on the next few pages to give you some ideas for your resume. Keep in mind that this is a sample and is **not** the template for a perfect resume. Your resume will be different as it will be a reflection of your own **skills, experiences** and **presentation** style.

Note the **resume writing tips** throughout, and check out the **resume FAQs** at the end.



*What should you leave out of your resume?*

The general answer is:

- anything that is not relevant to the position you are applying for, and
- anything that could prevent you from being offered an interview.

This usually means information such as:

- ✗Date of birth
- ✗Marital status
- ✗Whether you have children
- ✗Religious background
- ✗Health status
- ✗Disability
- ✗Political affiliation

For each section of your resume, ask yourself

- Is this relevant?
- Could it be perceived negatively?
- Can I word this in a positive way?

Get feedback, but **if in doubt – leave it out.**

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# Allison Smith's Resume

473 Barrington Street  
Red Hill Queensland 4059

t: 3345 7768  
m: 0413 721 201  
e: [allie.smith@bigpond.com](mailto:allie.smith@bigpond.com)

## RESUME TIP 1

Only include **relevant** contact information – it's not necessary to include your date of birth, marital status, etc. Make sure you have a **professional email address** – you may need to set one up specifically for your job search correspondence.

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## QUALIFICATIONS

### Bachelor of Health Science (Nutrition and Dietetics)

2006 - 2009

Queensland University of Technology  
Due to complete course in November 2009  
Course GPA 5.95

#### Key achievements:

- Grades of credit and above obtained for all subjects to date
- Received the Food Industries Association of Queensland Award 2009 for demonstrating outstanding academic achievement and practical ability as a third year student
- Participated in QUT's Career Mentor Scheme since mid 2008
  - involved 2 hours/month contact with mentor
  - placed with Deborah Mathers, Senior Dietician, Holy Spirit Hospital South Brisbane
  - participated in regular work observations and shadowing of nutrition and dietetics staff in the hospital
- Achieved excellent ratings in all areas of dietetic practice – see attached reports



## RESUME TIP 2

Remember to show **highlights** from your course.

Think about key assignments, individual or group projects, presentations, grades – anything that demonstrates that you have the **professional and personal qualities and skills** the employer is looking for. Everyone else in your degree applying for positions will have the same qualification. **What makes you stand out from everyone else?**

Employers won't know unless you tell them!

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### Nutrition and Dietetics placements

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#### Community placement

##### **Inala Community Nutrition Unit** (6 weeks – September/October 2009)

Skills developed/responsibilities:

- Conducted needs assessments, searched and reviewed literature, reports and health statistics, assessed and integrated this data
- Researched and wrote articles on a variety of health promotion topics for the nutrition unit's staff newsletter, including oral health, influenza and breast cancer screening
- Developed, presented and evaluated a "Healthy Lunchbox" workshop pilot, including a session plan, promotional posters and accompanying recipe booklet

#### Foodservice placement

##### **Mater Children's Hospital** (3 weeks – August 2009)

Skills developed/ responsibilities:

- Conducted analysis of texture-modified menu and patients' ability to meet energy, protein and fluid needs
- Wrote a report for the hospital and made recommendations for improving the intake of patients on texture-modified diets

#### Clinical placement

##### **Sunshine Coast Hospital** (6 weeks – March/April 2009)

Skills developed/ responsibilities:

- Conducted nutritional assessments
- Planned and implemented appropriate nutritional care for a range of patients and health conditions
- Communicated effectively with patients to build rapport and deliver individualised education and counselling
- Completed appropriate documentation and discharge planning
- Attended multi-disciplinary team meetings and communicated in a professional manner

#### Comment from recent clinical placement report

*"Allie displayed a high level of motivation and confidence on this dietetic practicum.*

*I was pleased to observe her ability to reflect on feedback and modify her approach accordingly when appropriate.*

*She demonstrates an extremely competent standard of dietetics practice and her calm, friendly, interested and professional manner is appreciated by patients and colleagues."*

Jenny Fitzgerald, Placement Supervisor, Mater Children's Hospital, August 2009

#### RESUME TIP 3

*Your pracs and/or other degree-related professional experiences are important to employers.*

*These experiences give employers an indication of how you will perform in their workplace - so make sure you **highlight your skills demonstrated/ gained, responsibilities and achievements** on placement or from your voluntary or paid work experience.*

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### Other career-related experience

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#### Health Promotion Assistant

Nutrition Australia

June 2008 - current

(voluntary – 10-15 hours/week depending on study commitments)

Skills developed/responsibilities:

- conduct literature reviews on topical nutrition issues
- assist staff to plan and deliver health education seminars on topics including *healthy lunches for children, nutrition for expectant and new mothers and achieving and maintaining a healthy weight for over 50s.*
- contribute content to and provide design and layout assistance for Nutrition Australia's monthly hardcopy and email newsletter

#### Activities Officer

Sept 2007 – Feb 2009

Children's ward

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital

- This was a voluntary role .5 day/week working with individuals and small groups of children in collaboration with the Education Coordinator

Skills developed/responsibilities:

- developed and implementing age-appropriate, stimulating and safe activities for children 5-12 years of age
- adapted activities when necessary depending on motivation, interest and ability of children to participate
- liaised with hospital staff and children's caregivers to plan activities and provide feedback
- demonstrated empathy and provided emotional support to sick children
- developed increased awareness of specific care needs of young children in hospital

#### RESUME TIP 4

*It doesn't matter if your experience is paid or unpaid – it has all helped you to develop your professional skills. Think about using **one heading** such as Professional Experience or Career-related Experience to include any voluntary work, practicum placements, work experience or paid work related to your degree.*

***Or use separate headings** if this better encapsulates your experiences. There's no one right way to do this!*

*Make sure you can **articulate the professional skills** you've developed and demonstrated in these roles. Look at the info on **Personal Transferable Skills** at [www.careers.qut.edu.au](http://www.careers.qut.edu.au), under Applying for a Job, then Applications.*



## OTHER EMPLOYMENT

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### Barista and customer service assistant

*December 2007 – current*

Hudson's Coffee, Brisbane

(5-25 hours/week depending on university commitments)

Skills developed/responsibilities:

- produce a quality product for every client
- provide friendly, efficient customer service
- maintain a safe, clean and pleasant environment for customers and staff
- balance cash register funds at end of each shift
- provide barista training and orientation to café operating procedures for new staff
- demonstrate safe food-handling practices and knowledge of HACCP
- nominated as workplace health and safety representative

Awarded "Employee of the Month" 3 times during my employment so far

#### RESUME TIP 5

*Don't underestimate the value of "non degree-related employment". You will have gained valuable skills that are **transferable** to more professional roles, so use this opportunity to **promote yourself** to your future employer.*



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MEMBERSHIP

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Active participant in QUT's **Career Mentor Scheme** (June 2008 – current)

Student member of **Dietitians Association of Australia** since October 2007

- participate in monthly networking functions
- involved in planning and implementing February 2009 information day for new QUT nutrition and dietetics students
- assisted with organisation of 2008 annual conference

#### RESUME TIP 6

*Demonstrate your **commitment to your chosen field** by including any professional memberships you have, professional development (workshops, seminars, other training) you've attended, subscriptions to professional journals, conferences attended and so on.*

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS

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- Compete in regular triathlon events around Queensland
- Travelled overseas to Hong Kong, China, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand
- Speak basic Mandarin
- Love to cook, especially Asian-inspired foods

## REFEREES

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Ms Ellen Parker  
Dietitian/Nutritionist  
Sunshine Coast Hospital, Maroochydore  
t 5434 7786  
e [e.parker@sc.qld.gov.au](mailto:e.parker@sc.qld.gov.au)  
*Ellen supervised my clinical placement*

Ms Jenny Fitzgerald RN  
Dietitian  
Mater Children's Hospital, Woolloongabba  
t 3220 1700  
e [jenny.fitzgerald@mater.qld.org.au](mailto:jenny.fitzgerald@mater.qld.org.au)  
*Jenny supervised my foodservice placement*

Mrs Deborah Mathers  
Senior Dietitian  
Holy Spirit Hospital, South Brisbane  
t 3121 9907  
e [mathersd@holyspirit.qld.org.au](mailto:mathersd@holyspirit.qld.org.au)  
*Deborah has been my professional mentor since June 2007*

### RESUME TIP 7

*Make sure you keep your referees **informed** of the positions you are applying for, so that they are **prepared** for when an employer contacts them to find out more about you.*

*Provide your referees with an updated resume and copies of your application letter, responses to selection criteria, etc, whenever you apply for a position.*

*And make sure you're confident that your **referee supports you!** If you're not sure that your referee will **promote you** in the most positive way – they're probably not a good choice of referee.*

Copies of placement reports available on request

### NEED MORE HELP?

*There's lots of information available to assist you to put your resume together.*

- Go to **Resume Builder** which is accessed via QUT Virtual and be guided to compile your resume section by section.
- Check out the **Careers and Employment website** [www.careers.qut.edu.au](http://www.careers.qut.edu.au) and look under For Students/Graduates then **Applying for a job** for info on resumes and other application paperwork as well as personal transferable skills.
- Have a look at **Australian sites** such as CareerOne for resources on resume writing. Go to <http://www.careerone.com.au/jobs/job-search/get-that-job/improve-your-resume>
- Check out the **FAQs** on the next two pages.

# RESUME FAQs

## **What's the difference between a resume and a CV?**

The terms **resume** and **curriculum vitae/CV** are often used interchangeably, but usually a resume is the summary document that employers are seeking, and a CV is a more detailed document often used where extensive professional experience is required.



## **How long should my resume be?**

Depending on how much experience (paid or unpaid) you have had, a new graduate's resume would usually be around 3-4 pages. Aim to find a **balance** between being concise and giving enough information to **promote yourself effectively**. A one page American-style resume is not usually appropriate in Australia, but wherever possible, **be guided by what an employer is requesting**.

## **Is it a good idea to include a photo?**

A photo can be a great way to personalise your resume. However, the risk is that you could be **discriminated** against based on your appearance, i.e. being perceived as too young /old / serious/ flighty/ inexperienced and so on. So you could miss out on an interview based on someone's possibly inaccurate perception of you. If you like the idea of a photo, think about taking a separate copy of your resume with a photo included, when you meet with an employer. Then they have the opportunity to meet with you and hear what you have to say, and have a resume with your photo to remind them of who you are.



## **What if I failed some of my subjects during my course – how do I put this in my resume?**

Remember that the purpose of your resume is to get the employer interested in meeting with you - so think carefully about the information you include. Your resume is not a "warts and all" documentation of everything you've done in your life until now. It's **selected, relevant information** – targeted to that particular employer and job role. **So aim to highlight your strengths, skills, experiences and achievements, and only include information that reflects you in the most positive light**. However, that doesn't mean that you can alter the facts! If you have some failed units, include in your resume only information about units you've performed well in, or make a general statement about your overall GPA if that's worth highlighting. Think about how to **talk about negative experiences in a positive way** – you might have failed a unit, but from that experience you've learnt better time management and study skills/you've learnt to know when you've taken on too much and need to adjust your work-life balance/you've learnt when you need to ask for support etc... and your grades have improved consistently since then. In this way, perceived negatives don't stop you from getting to an interview, and you will be able to promote the **learning** you have gained from the experience.

## **How far back should I go with my employment history?**

Usually the most **recent** information is the most relevant for your resume. So if you've had a lot of employment experience, think about limiting it to the past 5-10 years or so. You don't have to include everything – be **selective** and think about the **relevance** of your experience to what you are applying for. And remember to highlight the **transferable skills** from your employment!



# RESUME FAQs

## ***What if I don't have any health-related experience to include in my resume?***

**Your experience is valuable** – whether it is paid or unpaid, health-related or not. Some of you will have gained a wealth of industry experience in your course via your clinical/industry **placements**. Make sure that in your resume you promote your learning, skills demonstrated and achievements while on prac. If you have been **employed part-time** in a health-related role during your course, this is also excellent experience to include in your resume. **Voluntary work** is also a great addition to your resume. Many students work in non-health related jobs while studying, and feel hesitant about listing this experience in their resume. Remember that prospective employers are interested in the **skills** you've developed and demonstrated in these roles too, as these skills are often **transferable across employment roles**. Think in terms of communication skills, ability to prioritise, meet deadlines, work as an effective team member, etc. Check out handouts on [www.careers.qut.edu.au](http://www.careers.qut.edu.au) for help with identifying your **personal transferable skills** – and promote them with pride in your resume!



## ***What if I've had jobs that involved similar skills – do I have to list them separately for each job?***

Try to make your resume **interesting** and **easy to read** for potential employers. Rather than repeating similar duties/responsibilities/ skills for similar positions that you have held, think about listing each position and then do a **summary** of skills under this.

## ***Do I need to include my interests/ extracurricular activities?***

As with any part of your resume, only include information that reflects **positively** on you in relation to the position you are applying for. Your interests and extracurricular activities can be a great way to personalise your resume and present yourself as a **well-rounded applicant**. Think carefully about **what your interests and activities say about you** and be prepared to discuss them further at interview if asked.



## ***Who can I list as professional referees in my resume?***

Professional referees can include current or recent employers, supervisors from your work experience, practicum placements or voluntary work, your mentor, or someone with whom you have built a professional relationship, or maybe even your lecturer or tutor. They are people who can comment on your **professional or employment related skills**. Make sure you build and maintain these relationships throughout your course so that you can ask these people to be referees for you when you are applying for jobs.



## ***How do I make my resume stand out from all the others that will be received?***

Resumes are very **subjective** – everyone has their own idea of what makes a good resume. What one employer thinks is a brilliant resume, another may be unimpressed by. Get **feedback** from employers, lecturers and careers staff and work towards a resume that balances **being different** from others but is still within the **comfort zone** of employers. Experiment with **design features** such as different fonts, watermarks and borders. If you use colours, make sure your resume photocopies clearly. Use bold, uppercase, underlining or italics to highlight different sections of your resume. Use bullet points where possible, rather than lengthy text. Different types of paper can also create a different effect – but make sure your resume photocopies clearly or you risk your copied resume not looking as professional as your original.