

Resumes for Graduate Program Applications

The heart of resume design is customization – effective resumes (and cover letters) are tailored to respond to roles, responsibilities, and skills based on specific job descriptions from particular industries. Tools such as JobScan can help you assess the extent to which the language on your resume conveys a clear fit for a particular opportunity.

Resumes included with graduate school applications are somewhat different than those for the job search. Across graduate programs, admissions committees look for: analytical and critical thinking, oral and written communication abilities, and research and technical skills, as well as prior experience and a passionate interest in the field or industry you hope to pursue. Since you are applying for advanced study, there is more latitude to include a range of skills and interests to convey how you and your background add value to a diverse global academic community.

The resume samples provided on our website demonstrate how you can use such categories as Relevant Coursework and Prior Experience to show your fit for study in a particular graduate program. Any evidence of program-related expertise such as writing, projects, research and presentation experience, or relevant skills and interests will be helpful in providing a fuller picture of your background as an applicant. If you are at an advanced stage of your career, your resume may go to two pages to capture the extent of your experience.

The resume samples show how you can present your academic, work, leadership, and service to align with the graduate program in which you hope to enroll. These candidates were applying to Master's programs; however, resumes (rather than CVs) are typically requested by PhD programs as well. The samples model an overall structure and strategy that works across fields, with each resume customized for a particular program.