

Tips for Strengthening Your Graduate Program Application



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Applicant Profile

Including specific details for the following types of information is strongly recommended. Use this type of information to support your Study Plan/Research Interest narrative.

Professional Organization Membership: Duration of membership, organization name, your role (e.g. member, sub-committee member, executive committee role)

Committee Work: Dates (e.g. 2019- present), committee name, organization, your role

Volunteer Work: Dates, organization name, your role

Preceptorship/Mentorship: Dates, name of organization, how many and what type of mentees (e.g. students/new employees)

Conferences: Conference date, title, location, if you presented include title and if poster or oral presentation

Employment setting awards: Include a date and award nomination regardless of whether or not you 'won'.

Study Plan/Research Interest

This is a great place to showcase examples of your clinical nursing practice experiences and leadership skills. If applying to the MScN program also include how those experiences have shaped your research interests. Carefully cross check your Study Plan/Research Interest document to make sure the details about everything you discuss are included in your Applicant Profile.

- Do you belong to workplace committees? State the committee name and purpose. Tell us about your role and how your role made a difference to your clinical area/organization.
- Are you a preceptor for undergraduate nursing students? Do you mentor new staff? Be sure to state how many and for how long. How did this experience contribute to your nursing practice/professional development?
- Explain how attendance/presentations at conferences you may have attended contributed to your professional development/interest in research.
- Have you been nominated for and/or awarded any workplace/professional organization distinctions/awards? If so don't be shy. Explain what the award was for and what you did to become noticed for a nomination.
- We'd like to learn about your membership in professional organizations (e.g. RNAO, Sigma Theta Tau). What is your role (e.g. member only, position on the executive)? How did your role in the chapter/organization to which you belong shape your research interests and/or make a difference to your professional development and career goals?

References

Three confidential references from academic/professional referees, with at least one from an academic who has taught you and one from a recent employment supervisor are normally required. The employment references must be from someone who is **senior** to you (e.g. supervisor, manager) **not** a colleague.

- **Are you a fourth year BScN student?** If so, obtain a reference from: (a) a professor who can affirm your academic abilities (e.g. writing/presentations; class participation; integration of research/ scholarship into course assignments, (b) a clinical instructor/preceptor/faculty advisor who knows you well enough to showcase your teaching, team work, networking and nursing practice skills, and (c) an employer (does not need to be from nursing; may be paid or unpaid/volunteer) who can verify and highlight your accountability, communication and leadership skills through training/certificate completion or committee work.
- **Have you been out of school for a while** and have no academic referees? No problem. Substitute a referee who can highlight your academic abilities, such as writing and contributing to conference presentations or research/quality improvement projects. Nurse educators or continuing education course/certificate instructors are examples of this type of referee.



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