



MiniMentor Magazine: Guidelines for Contributors

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Welcome to miniMentor Magazine. This is a monthly supplement in between the quarterly publications of Mentor magazine, which publishes articles and artwork aimed at pre-medical students as part of the same magazine subscription. It includes a variety of articles, including reflective accounts, wider reading, wellbeing and opinion pieces. We aim to prepare students for further, healthcare-related study, challenge readers' opinions, and develop worthwhile pursuits in the

healthcare professionals of the future.

Thank you for your interest in miniMentor, we're excited to hear about your ideas and start working with you on your writing.

Before you get started, please carefully read this document that we have prepared to give you more information about the contribution process. These guidelines will provide you with everything you need to know about how to prepare and submit an article to *miniMentor* magazine.

Please note that although we cannot guarantee publication at any point in the process, our editors will work with you to give you the best chance of contributing.

General Submission Guidelines

- We are pleased to accept and review submissions from pre-medical students, provided that the submissions are relevant to our target audience of prospective healthcare students in the UK who are hoping to pursue a career in medicine, veterinary medicine, or dentistry. A number of our readers may also be younger, and undecided whether or not they want to follow one of these career paths.
- We only accept articles that are prepared and submitted to us using the 'Medic Mentor Magazine: Article Proforma' with the correct formatting. Otherwise we are unable to accept submissions.
- Our word limit is 800-1000 words, excluding tables and figures. Articles may be rejected on the basis of being too long, however we may be able to accept shorter articles.
- Font size 12 throughout, 1.15 line spacing and in an easily readable font (ideally Calibri). Please include page numbers at the bottom of each page of the submission.
- All figures should be included at the end of the article, with in-text markers to indicate their intended print position.
- All submissions must be original. This means that they should not have been previously published in any other format, in any other publication, in whole or in part.
- Referencing should take the form of a bibliography in the Harvard reference style at the end of the article, **without** in-text referencing. Please see more detailed notes below regarding the referencing system we utilise at *miniMentor* to in-text cite sources.

Referencing

Remember the purpose of referencing: to enable others to find the same work that you found *with ease* and to ensure due credit to anyone who helped you with your work.

In most instances, a bibliography at the end of a chapter, section or work will suffice *without* in-text (Harvard) referencing. A bibliography is simply a collation of the sources you used to produce that

piece of work, regardless of whether you have quoted, paraphrased, or argued or agreed with it. Make it a habit to keep a list of all websites you visit, all books, magazines, newspapers and leaflets you read, podcasts you listen to, people you speak to, and works that inspire you when you are working. These should *all* be included in your bibliography.

There are times when a more direct reference is appropriate. If you are quoting or paraphrasing someone's work (that could be a result of a study, a diagram or table, or anything else where you are taking specific information and relaying it to your readers), it is best to indicate to your readers where that specific information came from. As we do not reference as a matter of course, I would suggest employing a variation of the Harvard referencing system to achieve this.

- For example, "A study from Oxford University in 2002 showed that 9 out of 10 rat offspring have teeth bigger than their parents", conveys as much information as "9 out of 10 rat offspring have teeth bigger than their parents (Oxford University 2002)", and is significantly less stifling to the reader and does not appear as academic. The former expression is therefore better.

Copyright & Plagiarism

- Copyright exists on any original work, regardless of whether it is marked as copyright or not. Any work that is protected by copyright law cannot be reproduced for work for Medic Mentor. It does not matter if you own a copy of the work, or even the original (for instance, a painting), you must seek permission from the creator for the right to use it for anything other than personal research.
- You can usually use data you find in books and on websites, and replicate their tables and graphs, but you cannot copy the graph or table itself, even if referenced.
- You cannot use images you find online or otherwise, even if you take a picture of the image, without the creator's permission in writing.
- You cannot copy large swathes of text, whole chapters or even large paragraphs, unless absolutely necessary to make your point. Any text you use that was written by someone else, no matter how much, must be referenced. Please indicate this in-text with italic formatting. If inclusion is absolutely necessary, please limit this to a maximum of two sentences.
- Any figures or tables taken from someone else's work requires permission to be obtained.
- Obtaining permission also applies to quotes, adapted material and any other content taken from previously published works or unpublished but owned by a third party. The original source should be cited in the figure or table caption.

Using the Article Proforma

- All submissions should be saved and sent as a Google Doc using the '[miniMentor Magazine: Article Proforma](#)'.
- Font size 12 throughout, 1.15 line spacing and in an easily readable font (ideally Calibri).
- Feel free to use italics and bold as you wish. Do not use any underlines.

- Please include page numbers at the bottom of each page of the submission.
- Titles get a line to themselves with two clear spaces between them and the previous and next paragraphs. Paragraphs have a single clear space between them.
- No caps lock (except for acronyms).

Whilst writing your article, also bear in mind the following:

- Check the word limit – articles may be rejected on the basis of being too long.
- Ensure your writing is precise and accurate throughout.
- Please ensure that any tables and figures included are relevant and help illustrate the message you are conveying with your writing.
- Make sure that you complete the required details on the proforma, including a full title, all author details, an accurate word count, and any declaration of any conflicts of interest.
- Critique your own work throughout - no one is a tougher reviewer! Don't forget to proofread before submission. As editors, we will review grammar and other stylistic specifics. However, it is hugely helpful if you take note of points below. It ensures a smoother and more efficient editing process so that we can get your completed article in the next issue of the magazine.
- Every sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.
- No double spacing after full stops. There should only be a single space after full stops, commas and other punctuation.
- You do not use double punctuation or ellipses(!?!)
- You spell check using an English (UK) dictionary (fewer Z's). If there are sentences you are unsure about, highlight them and let us know we need to review them with extra care
- Proofread your work. Please also get someone else – a parent, guardian or teacher – to proofread it too before submission.

Steps & Timeline

Please find below an outline of the general process and timeline for producing content for Mentor Magazine along with our expectations – from you as a contributor and us as editors.

1. Contributor will complete 'Expression of Interest' form. Please use the Mentor Magazine Style Guide (later in document), which provides more detailed information on how to go about writing an article for us, including the sections of the magazine.
2. We will contact you **within 10 days** to confirm your interest and idea, and ask you to produce an article plan.
3. Contributor will complete a plan **within 7 days**, which should include:
 - Your agenda – what are you discussing and (if applicable) on which side of the argument will you fall?

- A basic structure – what are the main points in your article and in what order will you address them?
 - If applicable, an idea of which sources you may draw on for information.
 - A rough idea of length and any additional material, such as artwork or diagrams.
4. We will approve your plan **within 10 days**, offer any feedback or suggestions and ask you to write your first draft.
 5. Contributor will submit the first draft **within 14 days** of plan approval. Please see earlier in the document for submission guidelines via Google Documents using the article proforma provided, with your name in the title of the document.
 6. We will return your draft with comments and suggestions **within 14 days**. Following this, there will be a **2 week period** of back-and-forth between the contributor and editors to polish the article and make it ready for finalising.
 7. The editing process is an inevitable fact of writing. The final version of your work is one which both you as a contributor and we as editors are happy with. Once your article is finalised, we may make small spelling and grammar changes but will not change anything more significant without your consultation.
 8. After this, your hard work is done! You will soon see your article in print in *miniMentor* Magazine and receive a **certificate of contribution** for all your effort. For any queries regarding certificates and receiving a print issue of the magazine, please contact admin@medicmentor.org (the editorial team are unable to help with these matters).

The Style Guide

This is a magazine for people considering healthcare-related careers, who are likely to be overwhelmed by information regarding application processes and how to succeed. *MiniMentor* Magazine instead offers a place to explore relevant but refreshing insights into healthcare and therefore welcomes a broad range of topics to foster the development of a well-rounded practitioner.

General Style Points

References

- Referencing should take the form of a bibliography in the Harvard reference style at the end of the article, without in-text referencing. Please see more detailed notes in the Welcome Guide section regarding the referencing system we utilise at miniMentor to in-text cite sources.
- They should support specific, factual claims and guide the audience towards potential further reading. Referencing can be tricky to master and is an important skill which is often learnt during undergraduate study. For many articles in Mentor Magazine, such as opinion pieces or reflective accounts, referencing won't be necessary. However, you might use statistics to support your argument or summarise research studies in a particular area. If you use someone else's work, you need to mention it in your bibliography. If you quote a study directly, inform the reader within the article.

- N.B. Wikipedia is not a source. It has references of its own, and they should be followed and recorded accordingly. The same goes for other secondary sources.
- There is a maximum reference limit of 10 references.

Length

- Our maximum word limit is 800-1000, excluding tables and figures. Articles may be automatically rejected on the basis of being too long. We may be able to accept shorter articles.
- Since each article warrants a different level of depth and explanation, the number of words appropriate will vary. An effective article does the topic justice. You are unlikely to write an informed piece on the privatisation of the NHS in 500 words, and a 3000 word reflection on your work experience will be too detailed for the reader. Ask yourself whether your article presents a complete picture of the topic and whether you could be more concise (keeping in mind your audience).

Different Magazine Sections

The magazine sections outlined below should give you an idea of the types of articles we're looking for. We are open to suggesting article ideas if you want to write but are struggling for a topic, but this list is not exhaustive; we want to publish what you want to write about.

This Style Guide gives you more detailed information about the structure of the magazine, outlining its sections and our expectations for articles and artwork.

Reflection

This section covers how to write a reflective piece. This can be about any of your own experiences on the journey to become a healthcare professional, including (but not limited to) an aspect of the application process, a memorable patient or case during a work experience placement, or any setbacks or personal challenges that you may have had to overcome.

1. Your reflection should be fully developed and follow a framework. We would particularly recommend the Gibbs Reflective Cycle, which includes the following elements:

- Description - This is an outline of what happened, including any contextual information that is important to help your reader fully understand the circumstances of the event.
- Feelings - What you felt at the time. This gives meaning to the description of the event and enables us to understand any actions that you took or how the situation impacted you.
- Evaluation - Objectively critiquing *what* did or didn't go so well, and *what* was good or bad about the situation.
- Analysis - *Why* did things go well or not. Is there any information you now have - after talking

with people concerned or having searched online - that can help you make sense of the situation?

- Conclusion - What you learned from the event. Is there anything that you feel could have been done differently in retrospect?
- Action plan - What you will do next time in a similar situation, or skills that you need to develop.

2. If it is a reflection of something that you witnessed and didn't take an active role in, then give your take on it and how it has impacted you, including the appropriate steps in the reflective cycle.
3. If you are mentioning something the average lay-reader has no knowledge of, explain it.
4. Your reflection should be on something that you feel could help others in future or that other students could relate to.
5. Avoid judgement in your reflections. It should be purely about your feelings and learning, not a condemnation of other people.

Wellbeing

This is a section of the magazine that covers practical advice on how to build resilience and help safeguard your mental health. The majority of our readers will have exams, as well as other external pressures that they may be facing as part of their decision to study one of the medical disciplines. This section will therefore be aimed at encouraging healthy behaviours that will support them through these challenging times.

1. This should be an area of wellbeing that you have knowledge or experience in.
2. There should be some background information given as to why this aspect of wellbeing is important. This can come from information from articles, personal adversity, or a mixture thereof.
3. You may wish to include things that have or haven't worked for you in the past.

Wider reading

This is a section that is your chance to share an area of medical science that you have done some wider reading about and interests you. Its purpose is to stimulate interest in this area, pass on your enthusiasm for the topic to your readers, and to inspire them to do further reading on the subject themselves.

1. This should be an area of science that is applicable to medicine, veterinary medicine, and dentistry.
2. Keep in mind your target audience. There will inevitably be a varying amount of pre-existing knowledge, so any specialist terminology will need to be defined and the subject of the article made accessible through further explanation where necessary.
3. The article should be both accurate and understandable. It is as easy to go into too much detail, alienating your audience and leaving the potential for factual error, as it is to go into too little detail, oversimplifying the subject and drawing a misleading conclusion. If you are unsure as to the depth that you need to go to, the editors can help with this.

4. Include an introduction which introduces the topic, outlines its importance, and details why it has caught your interest.
5. Read our guide on referencing to include any sources that you have used from your wider reading and further research when writing the article. If you made any claims, reference these!

Opinion

Healthcare is a wonderfully rich field for discussion and debate, and this is your opportunity to get your voice heard and practise subjective writing.

1. Give your reader some background knowledge first. Outline the issue and explain why its consideration
2. Once you've given the facts, try to offer a critical analysis of the topic. This is the Opinion section, after all. Break the issue down into its parts and explain your stance. Acknowledging any biases or interests you may have can help you to deliver a more balanced and reasoned argument. Opinion pieces and other such subjective writing should be persuasive but mustn't bend the facts to deceive the reader.
3. An article which argues for a particular viewpoint is much more compelling than one which simply outlines the 'for' and 'against' of an issue. It is important to be balanced in your discussion but do commit to your opinion and defend it.

If you have any further questions regarding magazine contributions that have not been answered after having read both the Welcome Guide and Style Guide in full, then email us at minimentor@medicmentorfamily.org.