



Cover Letter Factsheet

The cover letter is your opportunity to introduce yourself, demonstrate your suitability for the role and encourage the person to read your resume. Cover letters come in two forms, one is asking to be considered for possible vacancies termed as a 'speculative' letter. The other is a response to a job advert.

Speculative letters

If you are writing a speculative cover letter you will need to outline what you are seeking, whether it is employment, volunteer work or an internship. This letter is sent to an employer or employment agency, seeking consideration for possible employment opportunities, i.e. positions which are not currently advertised or which do not currently exist.

It is vital to incorporate the speculative approach in your job search for the following reasons:

- A high percentage of jobs are filled in the unadvertised job market.
- Many employers rely on keen students who write to them, of their own initiative, to fill vacancies.
- An employer may be impressed with your initiative, experience, and excellent presentation and make efforts to create a position to accommodate your request or an unexpected job vacancy may arise and your application is already in the employer's hands.

When speculating, mention that you are seeking advice about graduate opportunities or the industry, career paths, new developments or areas of interest. You could then indicate you are interested in voluntary work, casual work or vacation employment.

Cover letters

Cover letters link your resume to the job or organisation. It is important to emphasise or highlight information from your resume in the cover letter. The cover letter can also add information to demonstrate your skills and experience. These are our seven tips for writing cover letters:

1. Use business letter writing conventions. Left hand justified, open punctuation, clear, concise and readable.
2. Personalise your letter as much as possible. Find out the name and position of the person to send it to, and research the organisation so you can tell them why you want to work for them.
3. Keep your cover letter to one page maximum. Aim for four to five paragraphs of concise, easy to read text.
4. Address any key requirements if you are responding to an advertisement. Selection criteria, however, should be addressed in a separate response, in addition to your cover letter. Please see the selection criteria fact sheet for more information.
5. If it is not clear what is required, contact the person mentioned in the advertisement to clarify.
6. Include study, work, personal qualities and transferrable skills information.
7. Edit your letter. Check for any spelling or grammatical errors. Get feedback from an independent person. Fresh eyes will find mistakes you overlooked because of your familiarity with the content of your letter.

Sample Letter

Full name
Street address | City, State, Postcode | Mobile no.
Email | Social Media ie. LinkedIn (optional)

To Whom It May Concern,

I am interested in an internship at (the organisation that you are applying to). I am currently a third year university student studying a double degree in Media Communications and English Cultural Studies in addition to a Diploma in French Language. I bring a love of reading, writing and all things food, and I'm eager to learn from the best in your company.

As an individual enthused by the process of learning, I believe that I would be able to thrive in a dynamic work environment. The prospect of learning new things, developing my skills and applying them to the benefit of (the organisation that you are applying to) excites me greatly. In addition, I feel that I will be able to apply a range of academic skills cultivated during my studies to the benefit of a professional company and work force.

Furthermore, I am a very motivated and driven individual who always aims to complete any task to the highest standard. For example, through freelance work, I actively seek out and commit my time to opportunities that enable me to improve my skills, of which will also benefit my work ethic and later professional career. In addition, I am an excellent communicator, have initiative and can deal with issues under stressful situations.

Being naturally inquisitive, I took part in a month exchange in France 2015 and as a result, gained immense independence and inter-cultural skills. The skills I learnt while abroad are invaluable, as I had to adapt quickly to a new environment, a different way of life and adjust to language barriers. Hence, I am confident that these life skills will enable me to acclimate to your workplace and accommodate various organisational demands within your company.

My interest and passion for literature, the written word, publishing, food and my wonderful city of Perth extend far beyond what I have so far learnt during my degree. I believe that I will be able to apply my current skills to benefit the needs and objectives of your company while also having the privilege of obtaining professional knowledge from your team.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you and the opportunity to discuss how I can contribute to your team as an intern.

Yours faithfully,

Your name

Include your address details.

Address the letter to a person with Dear Mr./Mrs. (if you can) otherwise To Whom It May Concern.

Paragraph 1: Introduce yourself, the position you are applying for and how you heard about the job.

Paragraph 2: Talk about what drives you, your skills and how they relate to the job and organisation.

Paragraph 3-5: Take the opportunity to talk about your relevant skills and experience. Make reference to specific jobs or tasks from your past (work or life experiences) that back up the skills and abilities you write about.

These paragraphs allow you to relate your experience directly with requirements of the position you are applying for.

Close with a polite, positive statement that invites the reader to contact you.

Use 'Yours sincerely' if you have used the person's name (i.e. Dear Mr./Mrs.)
Use 'Yours faithfully' if you have used 'To Whom It May Concern.'

