



## Cover letters

A cover letter is just as important as a CV for job applications, and should always accompany your CV. It is not a summary of your CV, and its purpose is to get you an interview.

A different cover letter is required for each application and needs to be tailored for the specific role you are applying for. Like your CV, the cover letter is also a marketing tool to convey the most relevant information about you to an employer. This includes the specific skills and experiences that the organisation values and needs.

A good cover letter will make the connection between the details of the job requirements, and what you are offering as a potential employee. It should highlight the experience, education and transferable skills you possess that are advertised in the job description, and demonstrate that you have done some background research into their organisation.

Focusing on their requirements rather than your own is essential. The reader will always want to know what you can do for them, rather than what the job will do for you.

### STRUCTURE

- Your address, followed by the date.
- Ideally record the name and job title of the person you send the letter to. If this information isn't provided, make an effort to discover who you should address the letter to, perhaps by calling the organisation to ask. In that way, you may even have the chance to speak with the person before you send the letter. Personal contact like this may improve your chances of an interview.
- Dear Mr H, or Dear Ms B is suitable. Dear Sir/Madam, are acceptable if you don't know the person's name.
- First paragraph includes who you are i.e. student, recent graduate, including the correct name of your degree
- That you are applying for a specific role, and why you are interested in it
- Second paragraph focuses on what you have to offer, emphasising specific relevant skills and experience you think they need.
- Third paragraph may include why and how you can add value to their organisation, which you have researched already
- The final paragraph makes reference to your CV, along with your availability for an interview
- 'Yours sincerely' if you have used their name, Your faithfully if you haven't used their name.
- Always sign a hard copy of the cover letter by hand. For electronic copies, type your name.

### POSITIVE TONE

- Show your interest and enthusiasm in the position, the organisation and the industry
- Use positive and enthusiastic language to convey your suitability for the role
- Express yourself in a confident manner, eliminating anything that may cause doubt in the reader's mind, such as your lack of experience or inability.
- Try and avoid using the word 'I' too many times, especially as the first word in the sentence.
- Elaborate on the most relevant information in your CV, aligning your suitability to the role wherever possible
- Proof read the letter, and ideally get someone else to proof-read it too.



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### APPEARANCE

- Use black ink and plain white paper.
- Size 11 or 12 font is ideal, using clear and consistent font throughout
- Correct spelling and grammar are essential.
- Use bullet points for highlighting important information if you wish.
- Be clear and concise. A maximum of one page is normally sufficient
- Make it inviting and easy to read
- Don't cut and paste sections of your CV

### SAMPLE LAYOUT:

(Your address)

(Date)

(Employers name / Job Title / Address)

Dear (Name if known) OR: Dear Sir/Madam,

(Opening Paragraph) Who you are, what specific role you are applying for and why you are interested

(2nd paragraph) What you have to offer. Use the job description and company information to match your skills with their requirements. Let them know you have what they're asking for and that you will fit into their organisation. Describe the relevant aspects of your knowledge, experience, strengths, and personality.

(3rd paragraph) Why and how you can add value to their organisation. Include positive and insightful comments about the specific organisation and the industry in general.

(4th paragraph) Refer to your CV and encourage them to reply to you. Thank them for considering your application.

Yours sincerely (OR Yours faithfully)

(signature)

Your name should be typed under your signature



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### SAMPLE WORDING FOR COVER LETTERS

- I am applying for the position of (job title) advertised recently on CareerHub
- I have recently completed a Bachelor of Communication majoring in public relations, and have developed specific knowledge and expertise in the areas of (name 2-3 of them)
- My past work experience includes (relevant situations)
- A portfolio of my work is available for your perusal on (website address)
- My skills in the areas of (name 2-3 of them) have been developed in (work background)
- I am interested in working for your company because...
- Since completing my degree, I am looking for a role in (job area or industry name)
- I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my application with you in person
- My CV outlines my experience in the area of (general area) which includes (details of specific experience they desire).

For further information on cover letters, please refer to the Career and Employment Service: <http://careers.massey.ac.nz>

Good Luck with your application!