

Covering letters

Moore Stephens Isle of Man
HR Services

PRECISE. PROVEN. PERFORMANCE.

The covering letter provides an introduction between you and potential employers. It sets the scene for your C.V and adds a personal touch to the information you are about to give.

What your covering letter should include

- the greeting should be kept formal, do your research and find out the name of the employer, if not use Dear Sir/Madam;
- introduce yourself and your current situation, for example 'I have just finished...University with a... degree in...';
- mention what vacancy you are applying for and where you found the vacancy advertisement;
- note in the letter why you would like to work for their company - you could note their past ventures or high profile schemes;
- why the company should choose you is key to mention. Include your skills and attributes and use examples. Be careful not to duplicate the information featured on your C.V;
- conclude with your availability for an interview and thank them for taking the time to read your C.V and covering letter;
- sign off with 'Yours sincerely' or 'Kind regards'. Explaining your current situation provides a good introduction to potential employers;
- note your recent qualifications; include your grades, where you achieved them and any additional notes; and
- if you have taken time out before applying for a job to travel or volunteer, note the qualifications you achieved prior to the time gap.

How did you learn about the vacancy or company?

- include where you found the job vacancy for example in a local newspaper or from an online recruitment website;
- this is useful to the employer as it can show which method of vacancy advertising has been most effective;
- if it was a friend or potential colleague that notified you of the vacancy mention their name, it may benefit you or them;
- reasons for why you would like to work for the company can help make your cover letter stand out from the others sent in;
- try not to repeat any information you have given in your C.V; and
- here you can mention any research on the company you have carried out, noting any business ventures that have interested you in particular.

Why should the company choose you?

This may be answered in your C.V but it is useful to mention in your covering letter.

- include your key skills, in particular highlight those that are most relevant to the job or the company; and
- again try to avoid repeating any information you are providing in your C.V.

A light conclusion

- notify the reader when you are available for contact and interview purposes;
- the conclusion also gives you the opportunity to refer to information within your C.V for example 'My C.V contains further details of my experience in...';
- the conclusion also raises the opportunity to thank the reader for taking the time to read your covering letter, C.V and for considering your application; and
- when signing off use a formal close of 'Yours Sincerely' or 'Kind Regards' and 'Looking forward to hearing from you' to prompt a response.

Handy tips

- check and check again – Spell check your letter, and get someone reliable to proofread, Spellchecker can go wrong!;
- never handwrite the covering letter (unless specifically asked);
- type the envelope or alternatively use a window envelope, this will match the cover letter and look very presentable;
- keep it no more than one page long. Any extra information you want the employers to know will probably already feature in your C.V;
- keep it easy to read, use short paragraphs to break up the text. Avoid essay style writing and complicated designs;
- focus on the employers needs, research what the company requires and utilise your skills to relate to the company;
- don't photocopy or mass produce your letter, keep it unique and frequently edit to keep it relevant to the different jobs you're applying for;
- include all the information asked for in the advert, if they require references include them; and
- do not mention salary or any money matters, this should be reserved for the interview.

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