

Although emails are now widely accepted by many employers, you may still come across adverts asking for a letter of application. You may also need to write a letter to accompany your CV.

General points about writing letters

- Unless you're specifically asked for a handwritten letter, always word-process the letter
- Make a rough copy first and check for any mistakes. Ask someone else to check it for you as well even if you word-process - there is always a chance of a word that the spell-check misses
- Keep the letter brief - no more than one side of A4 paper
- Make sure your letter is well laid out and is on good quality, plain paper
- Try to find out the name of the person you need to write to, so if the company has a website you may be able to find a name on there
- If you are writing to a named person – Dear Mr Smith - then finish the letter with 'Yours sincerely'
- If you start your letter with 'Dear Sir' or 'Dear Madam' finish with 'Yours faithfully'
- Always include your full address
- Make sure you date the letter
- Print your name underneath your signature
- Make sure you put the right amount of postage on the envelope.

Requesting information letter

A job advert may ask you to write for more information or to request an application form.

- State the title of the job you are applying for
- Mention where you saw the advert (or how you found out about the vacancy)
- Include any reference number from the job advert
- If there is a named person in the advert, make sure your letter (and the envelope) is addressed to them.

Covering letter

This is the letter to send with your CV in response to a job advert.

- If there is a named person in the advert, make sure your letter (and the envelope) is addressed to them
- State the title of the job you are applying for and where you've seen it advertised
- Tell the employer about your relevant experience and why you want the job
- Mention anything that you want to highlight as especially important – this is your chance to really sell yourself and get the employer interested in reading your CV
- Keep it short and simple – don't just repeat your whole CV
- Give any dates when you would not be available for interview
- State that your CV is enclosed - and don't forget to enclose it!

Contacting employers directly

This is the type of letter you might use to write to a company or organisation that you are interested in working for, to ask if they have any vacancies (often referred to as a 'speculative letter'). You might also use this type of letter to ask about company training schemes.

- Try to get the name of the best person to contact. If you can't find out a name, address your letter to Human Resources
- Keep the letter clear and simple with details of the type of job you are interested in
- Say why you are interested in working for them
- Explain why they should consider you as a future employee. Highlight relevant skills and experiences
- Remember to send a copy of your CV with the letter
- If there is no vacancy, they may keep your letter on file and contact you when one comes up.

You will find example letters on our website.