

Covering letters – A template to try out

Your covering letter acts as the advertising campaign for your product (you) and should draw the reader's attention to the good match between what you have to offer and what they need; what motivates you and your interest in their organisation. This is partly done through the evidence you have provided in your CV but the letter brings all the key elements together and explains why you are interested in the job and the organisation. Use this guide to identify the key points or information you want to cover in each section then use that as the basis for each separate paragraph in your letter (allow about one side of A4). **Adopt a similar style for an email [with a CV attachment], but this needs to be much more succinct.**

Introduction: *Why are you writing? In response to an advertised vacancy (give details) or as a speculative enquiry? With speculative enquiries be clear about what you are asking for – the 'I'll do anything' approach is usually unsuccessful*

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Why you? *Referring to the evidence in your CV or application form, state clearly how you match what the employer is asking for in the advertisement or, with a speculative application, what you would expect them to be looking for. Describe what motivates you and attracts you about this job – show that you have a realistic understanding of the work and can draw parallels with positive experiences you have already had in your previous work experience, voluntary work, sporting activities, university societies and, of course, your degree.*

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Why them? *Say why this company appeals to you. Draw on the research you have done; website, brochure, contacts made at careers events, work experience etc. Don't waffle or make it up.*

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Conclusion: *Round off in a positive way. If appropriate, indicate when you are/are not available for interview.*
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