

Cover Letters For Graduate Students



Cover Letter Style and Format

- The purpose of the cover letter is to provide an introduction and a brief narrative of your skills and experiences. Keep it brief – try to limit it to a 1-page, single-spaced formal letter format.
- Whom do you address it to? Try to find the name of the hiring manager or director. You may be able to find this from a company directory or from your professional community of colleagues who work at that company.
- Limit technical jargon about your research. The hiring manager will not be an expert in this field and needs to be able to understand your skills and experiences and how they relate to the job ad.
- Aim for clear, concise sentences and a logical organization. Have someone review your letter for grammar and readability. The tone should be professional and collegial.



Letter Organizational Structure

Paragraph 1: Introduction

- Include the specific title of the position and job identification number, in order to make it clear which position you are applying for.
- Describe how you heard about the job, including the name of any referral.
- Briefly describe your current employment status and where and what you are doing.
- Briefly explain why (generally) you are interested and qualified for this position.

Paragraph 2: Identified skill/qualification area

- What is your expertise in this area? How can you enhance what is in your resume or C.V?
- Highlight your strengths as a candidate in this skill, using a concrete example that illustrates your experiences in the skill.

Paragraph 3 (optional): Second identified skill/qualification area

- What is your expertise in this area? How can you enhance what is in your resume or C.V?
- Highlight your strengths as a candidate in this skill using a concrete example that illustrates your experiences in the skill.

Paragraph 4: Interest and Fit

- Thank them for their time/consideration.
- Express enthusiasm for the position, the colleagues, and the company/institution. This requires some research about the mission or goals of the company.
- Request an interview.
- Provide your email and phone number for contact information.