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## How to Write a Cover Letter

When you send your CV for a job application you accompany it with a cover letter (CL). An academic CL is known as a statement of purpose and has a specific set of rules. The structure is formal and you will be expected to adhere to its conventions. The word count is 200 – 250 words. Within this parameter you will introduce your CV, highlight aspects of it that are particularly relevant to the work you are applying for, and take the opportunity to present other pertinent experience that may not be on the CV. Do not include anything that is of no value to your prospective employer. Be concise and to the point. The question in your potential employer's mind is whether you are suitable for the work.

### Format

A formal business letter is the correct format. In the top, right hand corner put your name and contact details. Now align left and below to write the name and address of the person you are addressing. If you only have the name of the organization then attempt to discover who you are addressing before you write. A phone call will help. Continue down and align right to fill in the date. The formatting for the date is as follows: Barcelona, 24th April 2007. Note that the place of writing is also included. This is not obligatory but it does add extra information. Begin the letter with Dear and then the title of the person as applicable (Mr, Ms, Mrs, Dr, or Professor) without the usual full stop that follows an abbreviation. Then add the surname and a comma. Leave a blank space and begin the body of the letter without capitalization of the first word as it has been preceded by a comma, unless you are beginning with "I" which is always capitalized. As following:

Dear Dr Armstrong,  
your advertisement for an assistant lecturer has attracted my attention...

If you do not have the name then begin with:

Dear Sir or Madam,

The letter should end with "Yours sincerely" if you have the name of the person and "Yours faithfully" if you do not. Alternatively, "Yours truly" can be used in both cases.

### Content

Write a maximum of four paragraphs in which you use the first to state the vacancy you are referring to and where you saw it advertised. In the second paragraph elaborate on your skills, experience, and suitability for the job. Do not simply repeat what is in your CV. Make it a little

more personal while still remaining formal and relate everything you write to the advertised requirements. You can provide detail here on how you have gained your experience and skills and why you feel confident in applying for the job. You are creating a concise portrait of yourself so mention those qualities that align with the vacancy and give the best impression. Paragraph three is about why you are interested in the job and the nature of the contribution you can give to the firm. Here you need to persuade the employer that you will enjoy the work and give as well as gain. Finish with a final paragraph with information on your availability for an interview. You are looking forward to further communication with your potential employer.

You are nearly finished. Leave a blank space and close as described above. Now leave two blank spaces and write your name. Your written signature will be inserted in the space above your name.

Leave another blank space and under the heading “Enclosed” write “Curriculum Vitae”. Alternatively you could mention the enclosure of your CV in the first paragraph.

The CV and letter should be printed on A4 paper and posted in an A4 envelope so that the CV and letter are not folded.

In an email submission attach the documents to a simple email stating that you have done so and request confirmation of receipt.

If you hear nothing within two weeks then contact the employer for feedback.