

## Writing Letters for Academic Purposes

### Application and Cover Letters

#### 1- What is an Application/Cover letter?

A **letter of application**, also known as a **cover letter**, is a document sent with your resume or CV (Curriculum Vitae) to provide additional information about your skills and experience to an employer. The **letter of application** is intended to provide detailed information on why you are a qualified candidate for the **job or the position you are applying for**. It can be a requirement for a job, an academic position, or a scholarship.

It differs from a CV in that instead of being a written overview of your skills and experience, it's specifically written with the job you're applying for in mind – allowing you to highlight certain areas you think would make you right for the role.

#### 2- Why is a cover letter important?

A cover letter is an important document in your application because it is the easiest and most effective way to stand out from the crowd of applicants.

It brings something extra to the table when you apply for a job – the employer will learn more about you, your personality, what you actually want from the job and gain insight as to why you're applying.

And, as your CV is supposed to be short, your cover letter is the perfect way to elaborate on your achievements.

#### 3- What does a cover letter accomplish?

Your cover letter should do the following:

- Highlight your strengths: Why do your strengths make you a good match for the position you are applying for?
- Express what your plans are for the future: How will this particular position help get you there?
- Convey a clear structure: Your cover letter should flow in a clear and concise manner.

#### 4- Application Letter for a scholarship:

a scholarship application letter is a cover letter that indicates your interest in a scholarship and ways in which the award would help you achieve personal and professional goals. It is a letter requesting scholarship consideration. This type of letter is usually required along with other important documents by the University committee. The purpose of the scholarship application letter is to convince the committee that the candidate in question is highly eligible for the award. This is one of the best tools you can use to make your scholarship application a success, together with the correct submission of any other required documents.

Your application letter should do the following:

**1. Explain why you're a good match for the scholarship**

The scholarship application cover letter is an opportunity to outline your main strengths from an educational and professional perspective, your plans for future [career growth](#), why you would be suitable for this scholarship, and how you would benefit if selected. Make sure you cover all of these points, using specific examples where possible.

**2. Establish a formal tone, use a clear structure and check spellings**

The cover letter should be written in a formal tone, and have a clear, concise, structured flow. Each applicant should also make sure to check for and correct any accidental spelling or grammar mistakes.

**3. Match your cover letter to the context**

There are various situations of scholarship applications in which you would be requested to attach a cover letter. You may, at the same time, be applying for admission to an institution or a program. Or you may be requesting a grant or scholarship to cover tuition fees or other costs for a program you have already been admitted to.

## **5- Parts of a Scholarship Application Letter**

**1. First Part**

**- Contact Information**

Just as every formal letter contains the contact information of the sender and the receiver, the same applies here. A scholarship application letter should contain the name, street address, telephone and email of the sender (at the right side). Afterwards, the name of the organization, street address and zip code are placed on the left side when writing an application for scholarship request

**- Self Introduction and a Milestone achievement**

First impression matters a lot and so is the first paragraph of a scholarship application letter. The first paragraph should indicate your zeal and your understanding of having such an award. It would whet the appetite of the reader. Start with a significant achievement that shows how much you value this particular course of study.

**2. Middle Part**

**- Key Details about Yourself and reasons for Choosing you.**

A scholarship cover letter for students should entail relevant information about your achievements, the role models you look up to, your struggles to attain the scholarship and the victory you would achieve for getting this scholarship.

**- Expression of your passion**

In this paragraph, the committee wants to encounter the zeal in attaining the scholarship and perhaps the sacrifices you must have made. This doesn't mean that you want to sound desperate. But you are expected to express how much you want the award in a constructive manner.

### 3. Last Part

#### - Call to action

In a letter to scholarship committee, a call to action paragraph is the last but not the least important. Do you want the committee to call you back? Then you just have to say it. Ask for a meeting arrangement and leave the notable impression that you have more to discuss.

End the letter with a thank you note.

### 6- Cover Letter Format Guidelines

Formatting includes factors such as page margins, font type and size, line, paragraph and section spacing, and document type. For example, a letter without the correct spacing between paragraphs, or with too much text on a page, is going to look cluttered, or a letter saved as a file type that is not meant for a text document (such as a .jpg or a .png) may prevent the reader from opening and viewing it.

a cover letter that is saved correctly and uses sufficient white space, a simple, reasonably sized font, and an appropriate salutation and closing will make a positive impression on your potential employers.

- Use the correct spacing: 1 or 1.5.
- Don't be tempted to use justification. Left side align is easy on the eye.
- There should be one - inch margins for some white space and friendly impression.
- When it comes to the paragraph, there should be double spacing between them.
- Fonts like Calibri, Arial and Times New Roman are welcome.

## Cover Letter Format Example

### Your Contact Information

Name  
Address  
City, State Zip Code  
Phone Number  
Email Address

### Date

### Employer Contact Information *(if you have it)*

Name  
Title  
Company  
Address  
City, State Zip Code

### Salutation

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name,

**Note:** If you do not have a contact name, you can skip the salutation entirely. Ideally, you will be able to address your cover letter to a specific person. Doing research can help you figure out who is the most appropriate person to receive the letter. Note: If you do not know the gender of your contact, you can write out the person's full name, e.g., "Dear Cory Smith" or "Dear Jordan Parish."

### Body of Cover Letter

The body of your cover letter lets the employer know what position you are applying for, why the employer should select you for an interview or a scholarship, and how you will follow-up. Organize the body of your cover letter into the following paragraphs:

- **First Paragraph**

The first paragraph of your letter should include information on why you are writing. Mention the position you are applying for and where you found the job listing or scholarship announcement. Include the name of a mutual contact, if you have one.

- **Middle Paragraph(s)**

The next section of your cover letter should describe what you have to offer the employer or the institution offering the scholarship. Mention specifically how your qualifications match the job you are applying for. Make the connection between your qualifications and the targeted position requirements clear. Use this section to interpret your resume and not to repeat it.

- **Final Paragraph**

Conclude your cover letter by thanking the employer for considering you for the position. Include information on how you will follow-up. Optionally, you can briefly restate why you would be a good fit for the position.

### Complimentary Close

Respectfully yours,

**Signature (hand written for a hard copy letter, or typed for a digital copy)**