

## Personalise your Cover Letters

A CV alone is enough for some applications, but a complimentary Cover Letter is still a standard and sometimes requested way for you to provide formal context to your suitability for a role and business. It's therefore best practice to have a template on file that you can adapt and change per application.

You should think of a Cover Letter as being about two things; first, your suitability for a role regarding your skills, knowledge and experience and second, why you are applying for *this* role at *this* business. The best Cover Letters outline not only why you'd make a great candidate based on the job description, but why you are excited about the opportunity and the organisation. We recommend keeping three P's in mind:

- I. **Personalise:** Every Cover Letter should be different.
- II. **Passion:** Demonstrate why you care about the role – and the organisation.
- III. **Professional:** Spelling, grammar and the right tone for the organisation.

Because every Cover Letter should be different, carry out basic research into the role and the organisation. Read the job or person specification and visit the company's website and note their cultural values and latest news. Google the company and click 'news' to discover announcements or initiatives to reference. Building up sound knowledge of the organisation not only helps you to tailor your Cover Letter, but also demonstrates your passion for the job and sector.

Here follows our recommended basic, one-page format for Cover Letters.

1. Personalised Greeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try and find the relevant individual to address your letter to. Otherwise, address it 'To Whom it May Concern', followed by the date.</li> <li>• It's not essential for you to include either your or their address, but do include your full name, email address and phone number in the top right of the page.</li> </ul>
2. Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State the role you are applying for and how or where you were alerted to the opportunity. <i>e.g. "I am writing to apply for the role of X as seen/listed on X"</i></li> <li>• State your immediate reason for applying; this could be because you have been waiting for the right opportunity at the company or because your circumstances have changed. <i>e.g. "I would like to be considered for this role because..."</i></li> </ul>
3. USP 1: Skills & Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first of the two main thrusts of your Cover Letter; the chance for you to reinforce your suitability regarding your skills, knowledge and experience.</li> <li>• Consider this an expanded version of the 'key skills' section of your CV and focus on the qualities and attributes the role demands. You should also highlight any relevant, formal qualification. <i>e.g. "Having earned qualifications in... / having gained experience at..."</i> and <i>"I understand how to... / I am able to..."</i></li> </ul>
4. USP 2: A Good Fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The second opportunity to make your case, this time in relation to the industry sector and organisation itself.</li> <li>• Try and demonstrate your knowledge of, and passion for the business and wider sector. <i>e.g. "I am particularly excited to work at a company that... / on projects involving..."</i> and <i>"I know you have recently X, which I would be excited to contribute to because of my knowledge of..."</i></li> </ul>

### TOP TIPS:

- Your cover letter should be no longer than a single A4 page.
- Avoid [vague and generic phrases](#).
- Don't be afraid to experiment with your template, especially for roles in the creative industries.

### Further Reading

- How to write a Cover Letter, 31 Tips ([The Muse](#)).
- Three excellent Cover Letter examples ([The Guardian](#)).
- Your complete guide to writing a cover letter for 2020 ([CV Library](#)).
- A selection of online Cover Letter templates can be found [here](#) and [here](#).