

WRITING A COVERING LETTER

What to include to make a positive first impression

You should always include a covering letter when you send your CV and/or an application form to an employer.

This quick guide sets out what you should include in a covering letter.

What is a covering letter?

A covering letter is a formal letter to an employer. It should always accompany a CV and an application. It is a brief letter that introduces you, the applicant, and encourages the employer to consider you for the job.

Can I write one covering letter to use for any role I want to apply for?

You should always write a new covering letter for each role you apply for, making sure what you say is relevant to the role and the organisation. However, you don't have to write a new letter completely from scratch each time, as there will be some parts you can reuse, but there will be other parts that need to be adapted every time.

What should I include in a covering letter?

The main sections to include are:

Which role?

Say which apprenticeship you would like to apply for and where you found it.

Why this role?

Say why you are interested in the role.

Why this organisation?

Say why you are interested in working for the organisation.

Why you?

Say what you have done that is relevant to the organisation.

What are you like?

Say what experience and skills you have that are relevant to the role.

What next?

Thank them and ask for an interview.

BEFORE YOU START

- Ensure you have the correct company name and recruiter details, as well as contact details.
- Think about the right language and tone.
- Have evidence or examples of any skills and experience you want to mention.



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Dear Full Name, e.g. Dear Claire Jones,
Dear Ms Surname, e.g. Dear Ms Jones,
Dear Mr Surname, e.g. Dear Mr Jones,

Tip: Use Ms instead of Miss/Mrs, don't presume marital status
Tip: Don't assume gender from someone's name.

Try not to address your cover letter to Dear Sir/Madam OR To whom it may concern unless the company has a no name policy and won't give you a personal name. It could imply you haven't done your research.

Address your letter to the right person. To do so:

- Check the job advert as it may say who to send it to. If not:
- Contact the company and see if they can give you a name (some may have a no name policy though). If not:
- Find out the name of head of the department your apprenticeship is in and address it to them. If not:
- Find out the name of someone who works in human resources (HR) and address it to them. If not:
- Address it to the HR department at the company.

Say which apprenticeship you would like to apply for and where you found it.

Dear

I would like to apply for the XXX apprenticeship with XXX, which I saw advertised on XXX. Please find my CV enclosed / attached.

I am very interested in the XXX apprenticeship offered by XXX because of the programme's focus on XXX.

XXX is a XXX in the sector and one of the most respected XXX in the UK and globally. The award-winning apprenticeship programme that you offer is highly acclaimed and I would be delighted if you would consider me for a position with your company.

I saw on your website and social media that you are currently XXX. I recently did work experience at XXX / completed a project on XXX and feel the skills and knowledge I gained from this would make me a good candidate for this apprenticeship.

You will see from my CV that I have XXX work experience and from this I have gained XXX skills, in addition to being able to XXX. I am a XXX person/student/employee. I am really interested in XXX, meaning I have a strong foundation for this apprenticeship.

Thank you for taking the time to consider me for this role. I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my application further at interview.

Yours sincerely,

XXX (your name)

Show you have researched the company and the content of the apprenticeship they are offering.

Say something that acknowledges the vision and values of the company, as well as their success.

You could say here something you are doing / have done that is relevant to something the company does.

Finish your letter by thanking them and asking for an interview.

Write here about yourself and why you would make a good apprentice at their company. Mention two or three skills and experiences you have that are relevant to the role and show you as the perfect candidate.

If you started the letter with a personal name, like Claire, end the letter with Yours sincerely. If you didn't manage to find a personal name and are sending it to a department, using Sir/Madam, finish with Yours faithfully.



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Use the same lettering and style as you used in your CV. See our Rapid Read on writing a CV if you haven't got one <https://tinyurl.com/mtusfnjw>

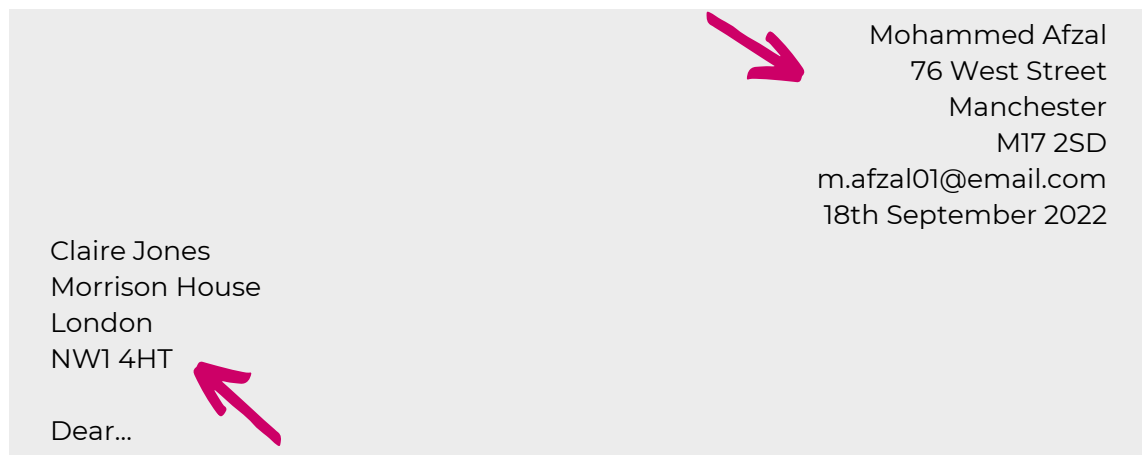
LAYOUT OF A FORMAL LETTER

What is a formal letter?

A formal letter is a professional letter, written in formal language, in a set format. The formal letter layout is mainly used for professional communication, and employers would expect to see a covering letter laid out in the set format.

What should a formal letter always include?

- Your full name should be on the first line.
- Your full address, including postcode, should be underneath this (using separate lines for each new line of your address).
- Your email address should then be immediately underneath this.
- The date (writing the month and year in full) should immediately follow beneath this.
- All of the above should be in the top-right corner of the page, aligned to the right.



- The recipient's name and address should be below this, aligned on the left-hand side of the page, laid out in exactly the same way as yours.

BEFORE YOU SEND

- Check if your language is clear and to the point.
- If your cover letter is longer than one page, reduce it to a page by taking out anything that is less relevant.
- Read through your letter and check it for spelling and grammar. If using a computer, run a spell check and grammar check. Then read it again with fresh eyes a while later – you can often spot mistakes when you re-read it.
- If you are emailing your letter and CV, make sure you put your name and title of the apprenticeship in the subject line of the email.

