

THE COVERING LETTER

(for internships and Year in Industry)

This is a formal, structured letter, typically no longer than one A4 page and essential when applying for a placement. Use the format of a formal business letter.



Your contact details normally on the top right (address, email, telephone); using the same font as your CV.

Date goes here

Name of recipient
Job Title (if known)
Name of organisation/company
Address (or location, if sending by email/uploading)

Dear Mr./Ms. Surname, [if you have the name of the recipient; avoid first and surname, e.g. Dear David Smith – a result of bad mail-merging]

Dear Sir/Madam, [if you have no name for the recipient]

(1) First paragraph: Reason for writing For example: *I am currently in my second year at the University of Kent, studying Accounting and Finance/Business Administration with a Year in Industry (as appropriate) and would like to apply for the marketing/finance placement as advertised by the Kent Business School... /on your website... (state where you have found out about the job). Or I am currently in my first year studying ... and wish to apply for the digital marketing internship advertised...*

For a speculative letter: Examples: *I have recently met ... [if you have a contact name] who suggested I contact you. / From my research into cosmetic producers in Kent I have come across your business ... As part of my degree, I am required to complete a Year in Industry, typically of a minimum of 44 weeks, starting this summer. The purpose is for me to apply my theoretical knowledge to practice in a real business setting, and I would like to enquire whether you might have such an opportunity in your marketing team. Full details about the Year in Industry are given on this webpage: <http://www.kent.ac.uk/kbs/courses/undergraduate/year-industry.html?tab=employer-information>.*

(2) Second paragraph: What interests you about this role? A short paragraph about your motivation - what attracts you to the role you are applying for? Demonstrate that you have researched this job and know what's involved [see **Business Insights** section on the blog] and explain why you want to work in that role.

Example: *I have already gained some work experience in this field and wish to build on this;*

I attended a careers talk by a representative from your company and was interested to learn... / I have researched this career extensively and believe I have the skills needed to succeed in this field/make a positive contribution to your business.

(3) Third/fourth paragraphs: What makes you suitable for this role? This is a substantial section where your task is to match your skills/experience/knowledge to the job; typically two or three paragraphs providing detailed information. Use the **person specification** from the job description as a guide. For example, if it states that the ideal candidate should have good IT skills, especially Excel, write about the software you can use, with a specific mention of Excel, explaining what you have used it for – show that you meet the criteria and address all of the points from the person specification!

If you have no person specification use the list of skills you find through the *Business Insights*. Think about how you will be able to contribute to that team/business. Mention your modules, individual/group projects, any work experience so far and the skills you have used. This section is about your evidence, i.e. your examples where you showcase the skills you have developed to date. These can come from study, work or interests/student society/volunteering etc.).

I

Example team working and communication: *My team working and communication skills are very strong and were developed in a number of areas. For example, during my previous work at McGregor's Gourmet Burger, I was part of a small team, taking orders and serving customers. At university, I am currently volunteering with Canterbury Help-the-Homeless, contributing to the team of helpers with my work in the soup kitchen and on the streets, encouraging local homeless people to make use of the facilities. I am also a member of the Kent Dance Society and have taken on the role of treasurer, taking responsibility for the society's finances whilst actively participating in weekly classes and annual shows.*

Be positive and take ownership of what you achieved – e.g. replace "I was asked to analyse sales data" with "I analysed sales data"

(4) Penultimate paragraph: Why do you want to work for this employer? Short paragraph about what attracts you to this organisation in particular? This shows that you have researched the organisation and know how they differ from similar organisations. This could be combined with paragraph 2 (motivation). You may find the employer's mission statement useful or the section **About Us** on their website as well as helpful information on the recruitment pages.

(5) Last paragraph: Conclusion - Brief statement, possibly mentioning availability for interview; short summary, e.g. "I believe that my skills, knowledge and motivation make me a suitable candidate for this position." Thank the employer for considering your application. Finish by saying that you attach your CV (if not a separate upload) and that you "look forward to providing further information in person." / or "I will be available for interview at any time and look forward to hearing from you."

(6) Signing off

If you have used Dear Mr./Ms. Surname, ... sign off with **Yours sincerely,** if you have used Dear Sir/Madam, ... sign off with **Yours faithfully,** then print your name.

Note: *Kind regards* or *best wishes* are too informal, and *Yours truly* or *Sincerely yours* are US and not used in the UK.

Good luck with your applications!

imj/2015