

**A covering letter should accompany your CV. It lets the employer know why you want to apply for the job.**

**Before you begin:** do some research on the company and the job you are applying for.

The purpose of a covering letter is to show your interest in the role and to let the employer know that you have the ability to do the job successfully. By doing some research you'll give yourself the knowledge you need to tailor your covering letter and promote yourself as the right candidate. Have a look at the company's website beforehand if they have one.

## Sample Covering Letter Layout

Your name  
Your address  
Postcode  
Telephone  
Email

Date

Dear Sir / Madam

**RE: Job title / Reference number**

The first sentence needs to clearly state that you would like to apply for the vacancy and where you found out about it.

Next, you should talk about *why* you would like to do the job. This is where your research should come in handy: it may be that the role ties in with your interests or that you have previous experience. If you can, talk about the company and what attracts you to the role.

Add one or two of your skills that you think are the most relevant for the job. Remember that the bulk of your information is contained in your CV; just highlight the key skills you think the employer is looking for. A covering letter needs to be kept short and sweet.

A couple of paragraphs should be long enough. To finish the letter, you could say something like:

"To find out more about how my skills and experience could benefit your company, please see my attached CV."

Thanks for your time,

Yours sincerely/ faithfully (If you know the name of the person you're applying to, use 'sincerely', if not put 'faithfully')

Your name here.

### Key points to remember:

**Keep it short:** no longer than one page, usually a couple of paragraphs is enough.

**Address your letter to the right person:** look for a named contact in the job advertisement. If none is provided, then use 'Dear Sir / Madam'. You might consider ringing the company to find out who is dealing with the recruitment.

**Most job applications are now online:** if applying by email, it's better to use your covering letter as your email message, rather than attaching it separately. If you are applying by post, it's a good idea to sign your letter.

**Think about how it looks:** make sure it's neat and easy to read, using the same font as your CV. Keep it clear and to the point.

**Check your spelling and grammar** or get someone to check it for you.

**Gaps in your CV:** you may wish to explain any gaps in your employment history or career changes.

**Sell yourself:** use positive language and try to put things in your own words.

### Need some help?

**All Wigan libraries have free access to computers and the internet.** We can show you how to use computers and can offer you lots of help in writing your covering letter. Please speak to a member of staff if you would like to attend one of our **free weekly sessions at your local library:**

**WorkClub:** support and guidance from friendly, trained staff

**Get Online**

three week computer course - internet; email; online forms

**Computer drop-in sessions:** available at Wigan and Leigh libraries