

## Writing the Cover Letter

The cover letter or email enables you to expand on your CV, saying what you can bring to the role and why you would be good at this job.

### Layout

Keep it short – no more than one A4 page in length. An exception is if the job has a person specification consisting of a detailed list of skills, and selection is based on applicants demonstrating that they have them all. In that case you can exceed one page – but remember that being concise is still important! It demonstrates focus and strong communication skills.

### Introduction

Introduce yourself and explain why you are writing.

### Why this job and/or the organisation?

Explain why you are interested in this job and this organisation. Tailor the letter to the organisation and job description. Using your knowledge, say why you would be particularly keen to work there, and what excites you about the opportunity.

### Why you?

Explain why you are well-suited to the position. Refer to the relevant skills, experience and knowledge you have, matching what you say to the requirements in the job description. Without just repeating what is in your CV, focus on your achievements and any transferable skills that are relevant to the role. State explicitly how you match the job criteria. Support your claims by referring to examples that may or may not be included in your CV.

### Conclusion

Reiterate your desire to join the organisation and end on a 'look forward to hearing from you' statement, followed by 'Yours sincerely' if writing to a named individual, and 'Yours faithfully' if you have not been able to find a named contact. Type your name, but also don't forget to sign the letter if you are printing it out.

### Top tips

- Write to a named person if you possibly can
- Check your spelling and grammar – preferably ask someone else to read it over
- Use simple language, short sentences and concise descriptions
- Tailor each letter/email to the specific role and organisation
- Don't start every sentence with "I"
- Give specific examples or evidence to back up your claims
- Be enthusiastic and interested
- Don't repeat your whole CV