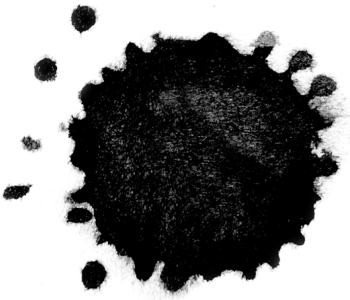


University of the
Arts London * *
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creative careers

writing an effective covering letter

Creative Careers is part of Student Services
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writing an effective covering letter

What is a covering letter?

It is important to put a lot of time into your covering letter. Your letter will be the first thing read by an employer and it will enhance your overall application. Covering letters form a link between your needs, the employer's needs and the demands of the work.

Covering letters are normally

- No more than one page in length
- Typed
- Contain between 3-5 paragraphs
- Sent to a named person in the organisation
- Tailored to the organisation you are applying
- Straight to the point – avoid long sentences

Structuring your paragraphs

1st paragraph: State either where you saw the job advertised or whether it is a speculative enquiry.

2nd paragraph: Inform the employer what you are currently doing. Tell the employer why you would be suitable for the job. e.g. I can offer... This is your opportunity to sell yourself. Outline the skills that are necessary for the job. It is important that you also provide evidence of where you developed that particular skill e.g. from work experience, your course, part-time work. Try not to repeat what you have written on your CV.

3rd paragraph: This is your opportunity to really impress the employer. Tell the employer what you know about them/the organisation. It will demonstrate how motivated you are to work for them. Remember here it is important to do some research using the internet and the libraries for example. Try and demonstrate that you have done some additional research e.g. read their annual report, looked on their website.

4th paragraph: A final short and polite paragraph. You could include your availability for interviews here and any additional contact numbers.

Don't forget

Finally, make sure you get someone else to proof-read your letter for you. This letter is your first impression and any grammatical errors or spelling mistakes will not look good for you. This could be your only chance to make a good impression.

Make sure you keep a copy of the letter so you know what you have said.

Use good quality A4 paper; make sure that it can be photocopied easily.

The standard layout is to have your address at the top, followed by the date, then the name and address of the person you are writing to, as illustrated below.

Dear Sir/Madam = Yours faithfully
Dear Mrs Soloman = Yours sincerely

Example Covering Letter

15 Oxford Lane
London
W12 9MH
Jenny Wong@arts

Eddie Steadman
AB Designs
45 Dorset Road
Banstead
SM5 8HY

29 July 2005

Dear Mr Steadman,

Design Assistant

I am a second year student at the London College of Communication, University of the Arts London, studying for a degree in Interior Design. As part of my course I have the opportunity to obtain some practical experience within interior design, and am writing to ask if you would consider allowing me to spend some time with your company.

The length and the exact timing of my work placement are flexible, but I was hoping to spend two to four weeks on placement placement, sometime between the beginning of March and the beginning of May.

My degree course has given me the opportunity to be creative and develop many skills. As you can see from my CV I have an apptitude towards CAD, model making and free-hand sketching. I enjoy working in teams and work well under-pressure as successfully demonstrated by my part-time job at Norwich Union Call Centre.

I am very familiar and also inspired with your company's work. I saw your latest designs in the latest edition of "Moi" magazine and reguarly look at your website.

If I was to have the opportunity to spend some time at your company, I believe it would be an excellent opportunity for me to learn both the commercial and practical elements of design. In return I believe you would be able to make good use of my skills and I would add value to your team. I would very much like an opportunity to meet you and show you my portfolio to demonstrate the work that I have undertaken at both university and in my spare-time.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Jenny Wong

Further information

In-person

Visit the Creative Careers service for a careers appointment. A qualified Careers Adviser will check your CV and covering letter. Creative Careers also organises a popular CV workshop programme each term; see our website for more details. The Careers Information Centre at Davies Street holds some examples of CVs and covering letters which you can browse through. Ask at our reception desk for more details.

To find out more any of these services or to check opening times, please visit our website or telephone the Careers Centre on 0207 514 6150.

Helpful resources

Many libraries including careers and public libraries hold a selection of books on CV writing such as *The Perfect CV*, *Creating a Successful CV* and many more.

Many websites contain further examples of CVs and Covering Letters. We would recommend you looked at the following sites:

www.prospects.ac.uk - click on applications and interviews

www.doctorjob.com - click on careers advice

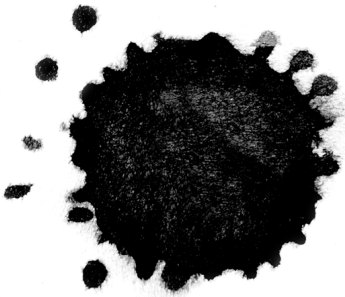
www.graduatecareers.hobsons.co.uk - click on job hunting advice

Written and researched by Sandhya Tanna

University of the Arts London
– a creative constellation

Camberwell College of Arts
Central Saint Martins College
of Art and Design
Chelsea College of Art and Design
London College of Communication
London College of Fashion
Wimbledon College of Art

www.arts.ac.uk



The main purpose of our written material is to provide specialist careers information, that is not readily available elsewhere, for our students and recent graduates.

All eligible students and graduates are welcome to use Creative Careers. We provide a range of services from information, advice and guidance through to practical group workshops. To find out how we work with students and leavers at your college or how to contact us visit www.arts.ac.uk/student/careers.

We aim to be disability friendly so do let us know of any particular requirements you may have. All our handouts and workshop materials are available in alternative formats on request. Please contact us to discuss your needs and how we can help. To make comments about this handout or suggestions for new ones we could produce, please email us at careers@arts.ac.uk

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