GCU Glasgow Caledonian University

University for the Common Good

Cover Letters

A cover letter introduces you to an employer and complements your CV. It gives you the opportunity to explain why you are interested in the role and organisation, highlight the skills and experience you can offer, and shows why you would be a good fit.

What to say? 4 easy steps*

Section 1: Introduction

This first section is very brief, and should tell the reader why you are writing to them, which job you are applying for, where you saw it advertised and your current status as a student or graduate. If you are looking for a work experience opportunity write it in this section along with your availability. By the end of section 1 the reader should be in no doubt as to why they are reading your letter.

Section 2: Why this role/company/industry?

Show them that you know what they do, that you have done your research and let them know why they are so appealing to you. Don't just tell them they're great but focus on the aspects of the role that really do interest you and why. It may be innovation in their technology, their clear customer focus or the way they support their team, whatever it is make sure you tell them how that matches your own professional ambitions and interests. Choose two or three things here at most and be specific.

Section 3: Why you?

This is where you should highlight the key aspects of your CV that relate to the role you are applying for, you can allude to your CV here but don't just copy and paste from there. This is your chance to showcase your most relevant skills and attributes for the role based on the job description/person specification.

Section 4: End on a positive note

Thank them for their time and reiterate your enthusiasm for the role, you could say how you are looking forward to the chance of an interview.

*Keep your paragraphs concise and where necessary you should divide a section into more than one paragraph.

Format

Keep your letter to a reasonable length, one side of A4 at most, and **tailor it to each specific role**. If you email your application, attach your cover letter and CV as one document with the cover letter as the first page. Name the document clearly and professionally, include your name.

Find a named contact

Address your letter to a named individual if possible. Use LinkedIn to find the right name or contact the organisation to find out the correct details, this is your chance to demonstrate you have gone the extra mile. If you can't find a named contact, use the traditional 'Dear Sir/Madam'.

Match the ending of the letter to the opening:

· Dear Ms Jones, Yours sincerely

· Dear Sir/Madam, Yours faithfully

Example – Cover Letter for an Advertised Role

Recruiters will read your cover letter before your CV, (whether it is in email or physical form) so this is your first opportunity to impress them, to show them you have done your research and that you are the perfect fit for the role. Let your enthusiasm and personality shine through as well as your suitability for the role. Keep it sincere.

66 Dumfries Crescent
Glasgow
AB77 9HG

6th May 2026

Events R Us
Edinburgh
EH51 9PF

Dear Ms Jones

Ref: 38752149 Marketing Assistant, Events R Us

I am a final year BA (Hons) Business Management student at Glasgow Caledonian University and was excited to see this opportunity advertised on the careers website.

I am particularly interested in Events R Us due to the breadth of events you offer and your wide client base, including both corporate and charity clients. I am attracted by the opportunity to work on both large and small scale events and the charity walks you promote for Cancer Research UK.

The Marketing Assistant role at Events R Us would offer me the opportunity to work on a number of projects, taking accountability for their progress. I continue to take on extra responsibilities in my part-time job at Argos and will bring these skills with me to this role. I would enjoy the challenge of working for a variety of clients on different projects such as Scottish Rugby events and conferences for the public sector. I worked alongside Events R Us colleagues at COP26, and their enthusiasm for the organisation has also motivated me to apply for this role.

As you can see from my CV, I have developed a keen interest in the events industry through my work at Inhouse Events as well as volunteering at COP26 and the recent UCI Cycling Championships. Here I was initially taken on as part of the road crew and was subsequently moved to the promotions team where I was able to get involved in the marketing of the side events happening in George Square. I took on specific responsibility for building relationships with local cycling clubs, resulting in increased coverage of our events.

Alongside these work experiences, wherever possible I have chosen marketing modules throughout my Business Management degree, where I have created marketing campaigns including writing content for social media, newsletters and brochures to a wide range of client briefs. I am now keen to start applying all of this learning within a marketing role in the events industry.

I strongly believe that I have the skills and enthusiasm to make a success of this role, I hope you find my CV interesting and look forward to the opportunity to discuss this with you further.

Yours sincerely,

Lester Kenopf

Example – Speculative Cover Letter

Not all opportunities are advertised. Contacting an organisation directly can be a great way to uncover potential placements, work experience or graduate opportunities. This is known as making **a speculative approach**.
When writing to an organisation speculatively:

- **Be clear about what you're looking for.** Briefly introduce yourself, including your course and year of study, and explain why you're getting in touch. If you're looking for a placement, include the timing and length of placement you require.
- **Show why you've chosen them.** Demonstrate that you've researched the organisation and explain what particularly interests you about them. If a contact has suggested that you get in touch, mention this briefly.
- **Highlight what you can offer.** Focus on the skills, experience and knowledge that are most relevant to the organisation and the type of opportunity you are seeking.
- **End positively.** Reinforce your interest in the organisation and indicate that you would welcome the opportunity to discuss how you could contribute.

17 High Steet
Glasgow
G1 4KL

28th May 2026

Network Rail
151-155 St Vincent Street
Glasgow

Dear Mr Robertson,

I am a third year student studying BSc Quantity Surveying at Glasgow Caledonian University. I spoke to Ms Ritchie at the Network Rail stand at the Glasgow Graduate Careers Fair, who suggested I get in touch with you.

As part of my degree, we have the option of undertaking a 3 month industrial placement, from September to December, and I would be keen to explore with you any opportunities at Network Rail.

I am particularly interested in Network Rail as I have a strong commitment to sustainable public transport. I am a keen user of the rail network across Scotland and beyond, which allows me to travel widely to pursue my hobby of hillwalking.
I appreciate your commitment to working towards diversity and inclusion across your company, and your emphasis on teamwork as one of your core values.

Having reviewed your website and researched the roles you offer I would be interested in exploring placements within the fields of property management or network strategy and planning.

As a student of Surveying, I can offer skills in a range of technical areas such as value and risk appraisal and construction contracts, alongside applied analytical and problem solving skills.

I have experience in working in large teams, both academically through large group projects (such as leading a group to survey Glasgow city centre and make proposals for sustainable development) as well as professionally, through my experience in working in retail and hospitality for 5 years, where I have gained a strong foundation in working with the public.

I believe that I have the skills and enthusiasm to work with Network Rail and would welcome the chance to explore any openings for an industrial placement with you.
I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

Cameron Johnson

Using AI to assist in writing your cover letter

Employers have varying attitudes to the use of AI in applications, and we recommend that you always check the employer's own guidance before applying. Some explicitly state they will reject AI-generated CVs, Cover Letters and applications, others welcome AI use within their own guidelines. Following their guidance is essential - non-compliance can result in your application being rejected or an offer being withdrawn.

The cover letter should be a very personalised document which makes the links between your CV and the role you are applying for. There are many AI based tools, such as CareerSet which can create a letter for you BUT we recommend you create your own, or carefully review the document AI produces to make sure it says everything you want it to. You will need to show why you are interested in the company, and how your own specific skills and experience make you an ideal candidate.

Employers are looking for you to present your authentic self in your application and remember that you are the expert about YOU.

Finally, consider having your cover letter reviewed by a Careers Adviser before applying

Final Checklist

Do you:

□ Know who to address it to?
□ Understand the role and have you done your research?

Have you?

□ Specified exactly why you are writing?
□ Tailored your letter to the job you are applying for?
□ Checked that all references to the company and any of their products and services are correct?
□ Formatted your letter correctly – does it look professional? Used appropriate language – no jargon or acronyms/abbreviations?
□ Shown them why you are interested in the job?
□ Demonstrated why you want to work for their company?
□ Highlighted your key qualities/attributes for this role?
□ Concluded the letter appropriately?
□ Checked the spelling and grammar is correct?
□ Got someone you trust to read it?
□ Named the file logically and professionally?
□ Brought it to your Careers Service to be reviewed?

Good Luck!

For further support, book an appointment with the Careers Service

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