

MAKING AN APPLICATION



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APPLYING FOR THE JOB YOU WANT

When you make the decision to apply for a role this will most likely be via an online portal. This could be on a jobsite or through a company website. Each portal will be slightly different but will ask you to submit your personal information, your CV or CV data from the jobsite if you used their CV builder tool, a covering message which may be optional and some other relevant details like driving licence.

If you apply through a company website, you may need to complete an application form online in addition to submitting your CV. These can vary in their complexity.

APPLICATION FORMS

An application form standardises the information an employer receives from an applicant and makes sifting applications much easier. They capture useful, additional information such as reasons for leaving a role, length of notice period and where you saw the post advertised. You will also need to declare that the information you provided is true and correct and wilful falsification may result in dismissal (or words to that effect).

For a prospective applicant, it is a pain in the neck. Another hurdle to leap or hoop to jump through. Thankfully, this should not be too frequent an occurrence in your job search unless you are focussing on public sector roles.

Take time to plan your responses as it is very easy to make basic errors. Read the form through before starting to complete it. Draft your answers separately and check everything. Follow any additional instructions. Write N/A rather than leave a section blank.

TRICKY AREAS ON APPLICATION FORMS

Current and expected salary can be difficult as you do not want to overprice or undersell yourself. Maximise your situation by putting a round figure covering your most recent package. For future salary expectations use a term like 'negotiable' or 'for discussion'.

Always express the reason for leaving in a positive way. Examples are career move or widen knowledge/experience. A lack of opportunity could be stated as seeking further opportunities. Boring work could be seeking a more challenging role.

Interests should be approached with caution. Just because you like keeping ferrets does not mean this will appeal to your future employer. Only choose interests that strengthen your chance of being called to an interview. For example, if you were applying for an administrator at a publishing house, then running a book club would be a suitable interest to share. Keeping ferrets would be suitable if applying for an animal oriented role like a Veterinarian Assistant.

Gaps in employment should be accounted for if they are over 2 months long. Use positive phrases that refer to study, family commitments, travel, job seeking, voluntary work.



COVER LETTERS

A cover letter will now most likely be an email or a box filled in on an online portal. You should always complete a cover letter, unless the process specifically states one is not required. A cover letter conveys more than just the message. It indicates how well you communicate, how professional and employable you are.

COVER LETTER GUIDELINES

1. Do not re-write your CV in the cover letter
2. Use crisp, succinct language. Get to the point quickly
3. Write, review, rewrite until you are totally happy with it
4. Use positive language
5. Use paragraphs and bullet points
6. Check grammar, spelling, punctuation and typos
7. It should be authentic and represent the 'real' you
8. It should not regurgitate sections of your CV
9. If you are writing to Dear Sir/Madam or Recruiter, sign it as Yours faithfully
10. If you write to Mr. Smith or Miss Jones, sign it as Yours sincerely





LETTER LAYOUT

- A three-part structure works best in a cover letter. You should have an opening paragraph, the main body and a final paragraph.
- The opening paragraph sets the scene, introduces you and explains the reason you are writing.
- The main body may be several paragraphs. Use this section to put your point across. Plan and edit this section carefully.
- Your final paragraph should be a courteous exit. Do not be too pushy in this section.
- Your letter content will vary depending on its purpose. The following table provides some guidance as to what to include.
- This structure also works if you are completing a covering message section on an online portal.

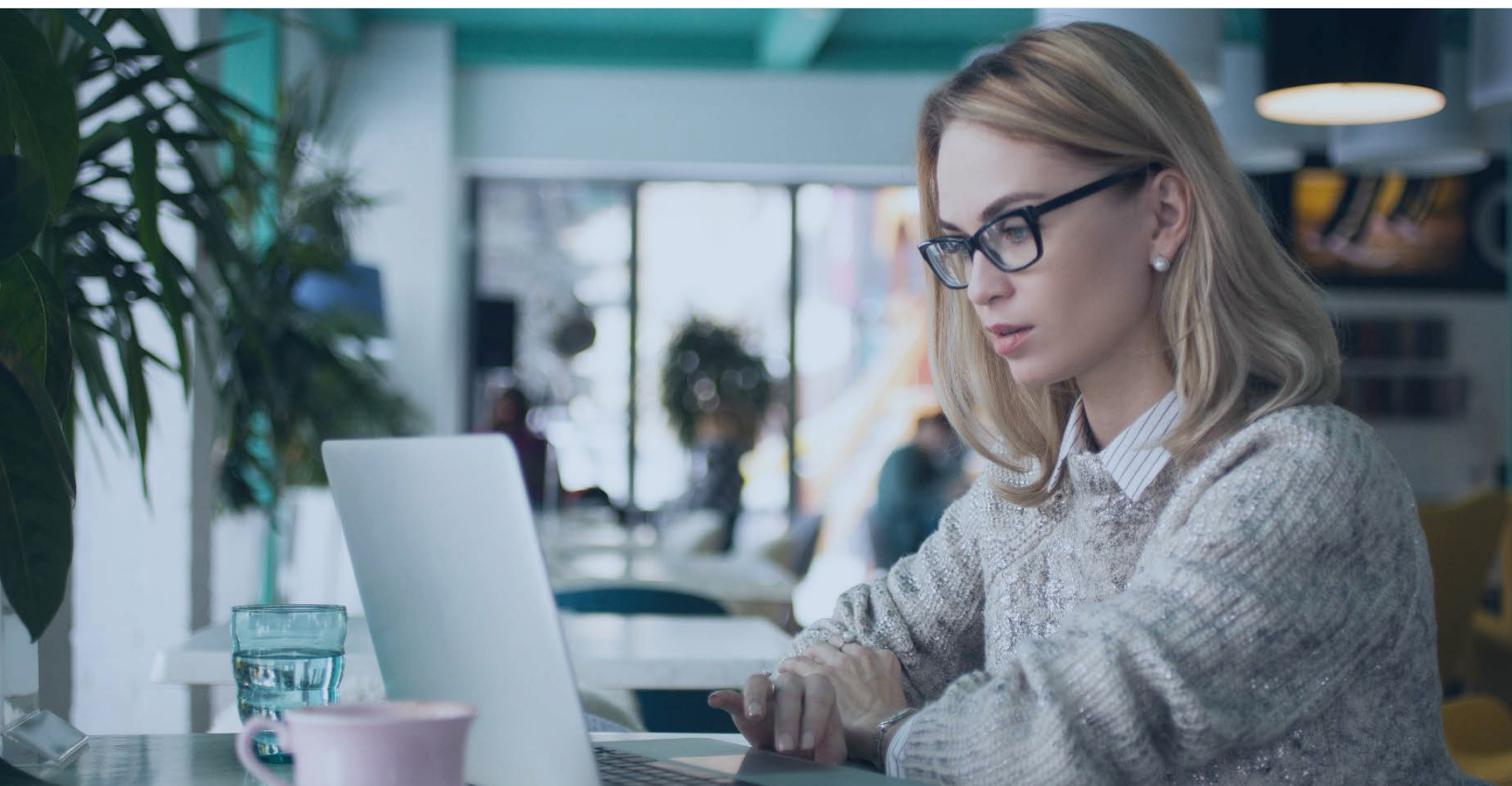
Type of Letter	Paragraph 1	Paragraph 2	Paragraph 3-4	Final Paragraph
Advertisement	Where you saw the advertisement. Job Title.	Match your skills to the job. Use their words and style from the advert.	Outline any other skills that you could bring to the role/company.	Mention CV attached. Next steps. "I would welcome the opportunity to tell you more about myself. Please do not hesitate to contact me by email/phone include the details.
Speculative	Outline your situation positively. Say why you are writing.	Flatter the company – why them. What skills and achievements you would bring? Link to your CV.	What you hope to achieve. Some longer-term ambitions that show you are dynamic.	Mention CV attached and mention that you will call them in a few days to discuss.
Network	Outline your situation positively. Why you are writing. Who gave you their name.	Describe skills and achievements.	What your value is. Tell them the benefits of your achievements.	Mention CV attached plus next steps. Mention that you will call them in a few days to discuss
Agency	Explain your circumstances.	Describe exactly what you are looking for. Give an indication of your skills and background.	Mention any limitations including if you are seeking temporary or permanent opportunities. Potential work locations. Current remuneration.	Mention CV attached plus next steps and mention that you will contact them again shortly.

SECURITY AND VETTING

For employers to ensure that they do not employ illegal workers you will be asked to prove your right to work in the UK. This will be an identification document like a passport. The list of acceptable documents to prove your right to work is long. If you are unsure of what identification is suitable, speak to the recruiter. Alternatively, you can check on the gov.uk website.

If the role requires driving and you use your own car, you will need to provide your driving licence and insurance documents which show cover for business use. If the company provides a company car, you will need to provide your driving licence.

Depending on the nature of the role background checks may be asked for. This will be required where you are working with children or vulnerable adults, some financial roles, or in security for example.



REFERENCES

If the company is seeking just to verify your employment, you can refer them to the HR department. Usually they want to confirm your job and dates of employment.

A company may wish to seek more detailed references. Before listing a reference, make sure that you have their permission and ensure they will be comfortable speaking about you. Choose references based on the job requirements. Maintain active relationships with your references. Tell your reference about any important opportunities they may be contacted about.

KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR APPLICATIONS

If you are very active in the job market you will find it helpful to track your applications and any contact you have had regarding the role. Use the table on the following page to help you track your applications.



Company/Agency & Contact Details	Position	Contact History
Tricia Bullman Halecroft Recruitment	HR Officer	1/9/17 Application sent 3/9/17 Rang to check received application 6/9/17 Telephone interview