



Internship Application Letters

Internship Application Letters share many similarities with job application letters (aka “Cover Letters”); there are, however, several distinguishing features in terms of content and format. The function of the letter is basically to explain your suitability as a candidate for the position, how you believe you can contribute to the company or program, and how you will benefit from the experience. The following are some general guidelines for writing and formatting an internship application letter:

NOTE: Before writing your letter, *research the company, organization, or program* to which you are applying: The work it does, the people who work there, and the type of work you would be doing as an intern. This will help you write a better-informed and more meaningful letter.

Organization & Content

The Introduction

Typically, the introduction paragraph briefly explains the purpose of your letter. At minimum, this should include *the name of the internship position you are applying for*. The introduction may also include:

- Your full name (optional, as this will also appear elsewhere in your application)
- Your student status, i.e. your year of study, your major/minor, and when you expect to graduate
- How you discovered the internship opportunity or where you saw it advertised (some companies/programs ask for this information)
- Many sources recommend making the introduction more interesting with an attention-grabbing opening statement. Make your decision based on what you feel would be most appropriate or effective.
- If using a motivation letter/essay format, the introduction could provide additional background information (see Statements of Purpose)

The Body

The body paragraphs will provide information on your qualifications, motivation, and future objectives. The organization of this information is flexible: You could begin with an overview of your qualifications, or you could begin with a summary of your future career objectives. The following are some general content guidelines:

- Explain how your education, experiences, skills, and abilities qualify you for the internship. This might include relevant courses you have taken, academic projects or research you have taken part in, jobs you have had, and any other experiences (including extracurricular activities) that have contributed to your personal or professional development. NOTE: Do not just repeat information listed on your resume. Focus on what you gained from those experiences and how it makes you a suitable candidate.
- Explain your motivation: Why are you interested in this particular internship? What do you hope to gain from it? How will it contribute to your academic and professional development? – this last point can link to your future objectives.
- Summarize your future objectives: What are your academic or career goals? How will the internship help you achieve those goals?

The Conclusion

The final section brings the letter to a close. Typically, the conclusion will:

- Re-state your interest in the internship (this could include a statement of anticipated outcomes, i.e. how you will benefit from the experience).
- If applicable, mention when you are available for an interview (provide dates and times).
- Finish with a polite closing remark (e.g. *Thank you for your time* or *I look forward to hearing from you*, etc.)

Format

Internship application letters can be formatted in one of two ways: as a business letter (like a job application/cover letter) or as a short essay (structured like a motivation letter or statement of purpose). Most sources recommend using the business letter format. However, you should always check company or program application requirements to see if there are any specifications for the format and/or content of the application letter and proceed accordingly.

Page Format:

- Single spacing can be used for application letters.
- Application letters generally use block paragraph format (paragraphs separated by a space), though the traditional “first line indentation” style is also used.
- Page margins should be about 2.54 cm on both sides of the page (“normal” margins in MS Word).
- The letter should appear centered between the top and bottom of the page

Length:

- business letters are typically between 300 and 400 words usually consisting of 3 to 5 short paragraphs. Essays formats may be slightly longer.

Font Style & Size:

- Standard fonts for application letters include Times New Roman, Cambria, Arial or Calibri.
- Font size 11, or 12 is recommended.

Writing Style:

Application letters should be clear, concise, and to the point.

- Do not include unnecessary details: focus on the information needed to achieve your purpose.
- Do not use slang, technical jargon, abbreviations, or references that might confuse the reader.
- Do not try to use humor, make jokes, or try to sound clever or witty – this can be easily misunderstood.
- Do not include highly personal or “emotional” content (unless it is to make a unique and necessary point)
- Do not use meaningless phrases like “*I have always loved economics...*” or “*your company is the best in its field*”. Give real information that is relevant to the application

Drafting & Editing:

- *Always proofread your letter several times* before sending it. Spelling and grammar mistakes look careless and unprofessional. This could have a negative impact on your chances of being selected for the internship.

Sources Consulted

The following sources were consulted in the making of this WCP Essentials Guide:

The Balance Careers.com: Cover Letter for an Internship Samples and Writing Tips: <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/internship-cover-letter-sample-and-writing-tips-2060231>

Indeed.com: Writing an Internship Cover Letter (With Examples) <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/writing-an-internship-cover-letter-with-examples>

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