



Writing a motivation letter

Are you thinking of studying abroad in two or three year's time?

Then make sure you do what the Erasmus Mundus Student Handbook recommends:

Try to write a "personal" targeted motivation letter, in which you explain why you are especially worth to be selected. Moreover, you should clearly explain your reasons to apply for this particular Master programme.

If you have any work or volunteer experience, be sure to mention it. The same is true also for any publications of your previous research. Being able to indicate your scientific interests [...] is also viewed as a plus. State clearly what your expectations are and what you would like to do with the knowledge that you acquire during Erasmus Mundus after having successfully finished the programme.

It does not matter which country or university you choose. What does matter is that you prove to be a suitable candidate who knows and can clearly, as well as logically, describe what their aims and reasons for studying abroad are.

Below comes a sample motivation letter including the typical features of this genre:

- formal style
- appropriate salutation
- clear structure (introduction, personal statement, conclusion)
- specific information introduced by formal expressions and polite phrases
- individual ideas linked by linking words making reading for the target reader easy

Your task is to read this letter, identify its positive features mentioned above, and use your first draft of the personal statement you wrote in the first lesson to produce a short letter of motivation. If you like, send me a copy by mail for checking so that you have got it at hand once you decide to apply for a stay with Erasmus or IFMSA.

SAMPLE

Motivation Letter

Dear Sir or Madam:

With this letter, I would like to express my interest in studying at the University of XY as an Erasmus student.

I am currently studying Master's Degree programme in Regional Geography at the ABC University in DEF. Having looked through the materials of the Foreign Department of my university, I was very delighted to find the opportunity to spend one semester learning geography at the University of XY. I have decided to apply for this programme because I am sure it would strongly enrich my future studies and help me in my prospective career. Moreover I consider this programme as a great opportunity to get in touch with British culture and educational system. Last but not least, I am very curious about different approaches to the geography at the foreign university.

I have chosen to apply for University of XY, because I really like its module system of study. I specially appreciate the wide range of offered modules and the freedom in making your study plan. Many of the modules offered are unique for me, because there is no equivalent at my home university. Very important for me is also an "Excellent" rating for teaching of the Geography department and the overall friendly atmosphere at both the university as well as the city. The third main reason why I have chosen XY is its Urban and Regional Policy Research Institute. It specializes in interdisciplinary research on key regional and urban policy issues, which is the field of geography very familiar to me.

During my prior studies I have found out, that I would like to specialize in Urban and Transport Geography. The University of XY gives me a chance to get in touch with these subjects through modules from both Department of Geography and Department of Town and Regional Planning. In my last year at the ABC University I worked on an empirical study with main focus on transportation costs of suburbanisation and urban sprawl. I really liked my project and I am keen to continue in it. I would like to use my stay in XY for further developing my skills in empirical research and starting working on my **diploma** project. The possibilities that gives me University of XY further expand those at my home university. I would take modules focusing on Transport and Urban geography and European Studies.

I would very much like to spend one semester at the University of XY. This would give me a chance to deepen my geographical knowledge in the inspiring, creative, and cosmopolite environment of one of the largest British universities. Furthermore I could improve my English and increase my confidence in passing the TOEFL examinations after I return. Moreover, I am confident that my experience in Sheffield would be extremely exciting, fun, and valuable for both my studies and overall general development.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to your positive response.

Yours faithfully,