

MOTIVATION/COVER LETTER FOR UNIVERSITIES

A letter of motivation is another name for a cover letter. Students typically send these letters to universities when they are applying for special programs, such as a study abroad opportunity. Letters are important because they allow you to introduce yourself to key decision-makers.

Instructions

1 Letters of motivation are formal, so use formal (business) style and format. Align everything to the left and begin with the date. Then skip down a line and write the address of the university contact person. Come down another line and write the formal salutation followed by a colon. Do not indent the paragraphs; just put a space between each one. Use a formal closure, and leave space to sign your name. Finally, type your name and personal contact information.

2 Create compelling content. The letter should contain about 3 paragraphs of useful information. Resist the urge to repeat what you have already shared elsewhere in your application packet. You may make related comments, but try to keep your letter of motivation original. In the first paragraph, include information about your personality and prior experience that will make you a good fit for the program. In the second paragraph, explain what you hope to learn as a result of participating in the program. List goals that include both positive changes you can bring to the school and positive changes the school can create in your life. In the third paragraph, write about steps you are taking to prepare for the program and express interest in hearing a reply soon.

3 Revise and re-write. After taking some time away from your letter, come back and read through it again. Make sure the information is organized in a clear and easy to understand way. Check for grammar errors and make sure your tone is appropriate. The letter should sound both enthusiastic and professional.

http://www.ehow.com/how_8576057_write-motivation-letter-universities.htmlCreate compelling content

COVER LETTER INTRODUCTIONS

Task 8 Read the following introductory parts of the cover letters of one person and match them with the event/institution they have been prepared for.

This person is applying:

- a) to attend summer school
- b) to study abroad for a short time at Bachelors Degree level
- c) to volunteer
- d) for a job

1) I am a second year student of Interactive Media at Masaryk University. I am writing to respond to the online advertisement for the scholarship at the University of Toronto for the next Autumn term. In my studies, I have been concentrating on the relationship between new media and information distribution. Given the opportunity, I would like to devote my programme at the University of Toronto to the three following fields: participation in the university courses and seminars, self study at the university libraries, and finally, consultations with specialists.

2) I would like to apply for the *Snowflake Effect and Metadata Course* held in July in Barcelona for several reasons: specifically, to gain new knowledge in the field of an individual approach to working with information and also in the area of metadata processing; to deepen my experience with an interdisciplinary approach to research and studying, and, if possible, to use the newly gained information in my studies and future research.

3) I am writing concerning the opportunity to spend a year in the U.K. as a Library Assistant and I would like to apply for the *LAWI Project*. I am a Librarian at Masaryk University in Brno, and also a student of a Postgraduate Course in Interactive Media at Masaryk University in Brno, with a research topic *Impact of Social Media on Academic Libraries: A Case Study of Masaryk University Brno*.

I would like to take part in this project for several reasons, namely, to get an insight into the British Academic Library System as well as the British way of life, to experience a different method of running a Library Service, to improve my practical skills in English, and to use such experience in my future career. I hope that my post as a Library Assistant in a British Library would be useful and beneficial for me as well as for the library where I would be able to use my experience and enthusiasm.

4) I am responding to the advertisement for the Library Assistant position that was recently posted on the Masaryk University 'Jobs Needed' data base. Currently, I am a final year student of Masaryk University, majoring in Library and Interactive Media Studies with an anticipated graduation date of May this year.

There are many reasons for believing I would make a very successful library assistant. My deep interest in literature, information, libraries and media, have influenced my studies even before I entered university. Having worked for the Liberec City Library (LCL), I have been exposed to a number of aspects of the library service and consider myself a 'people' person. My experience as library assistant at LCL demonstrates my capability of working in huge library institutions and of being responsible for specific services. Also, my education in Interactive Media has provided me with excellent computer skills that would ideally suit all your needs for a library assistant.

Academic English Akademická angličtina, Štěpánek Libor et al., Grada, 2011, p.190

Sample Motivation/Cover Letter

Task 9 Read this authentic letter and correct the grammar, lexical and register errors.

Grammar mistakes are in **yellow**; lexical and/or register mistakes in **grey**. Replace the words/phrases in grey in the text with these: *obtain acquire become prospective with over valued*

Name

Address

Prague, Czech Republic

Postal Code

Email

Telephone

Dear Sir/Madame:

I am writing to apply for the Erasmus student exchange programme at **you** University. I would like to spend next semester of my study programme at the University of Porto in Portugal. Currently, I am student of Charles University in Prague, at the Department of Environmental Studies.

I would appreciate the opportunity of **participate** in the Erasmus programme, because it **will** be meaningful for me personally and for my **perspective** career. Firstly, it would be **a** efficient and **successfully** method of **improve** my English and academic skills. I have been learning English as my first foreign language since age of seven, and I believe that this experience at your university would improve my knowledge, because I would get a chance to communicate in an academic environment. Moreover, I would welcome the opportunity to enhance my research experience at your facilities, since your university has a great reputation in this field.

I would like to emphasize that I am eager to benefit from this programme, as I would get to know Erasmus students from all Europe, exchanging practical experience. I believe that Erasmus programme is excellent opportunity to meet various people, spend quality time with them and learn about their customs, attitudes, lifestyle, etc. Furthermore, living, studying and **socializing within** international scholars would broaden my horizons and enable me to build strong social network with people throughout Europe.

Studying at your university, I would have a chance to compare the Portuguese higher education system and Czech one. If I **will be** accepted, I will use this comparison to promote the Portuguese educational system not only in my homeland, but in the whole of EU.

The reasons for choosing your university:

- to learn another foreign language, and **get** familiar with Portuguese culture and customs;
- to **get** practice in modern facilities and work in a different environment from that of Charles University;
- to enhance my chances of finding better employment, as I would **get** a truly multi-cultural experience, highly **valuated** nowadays among employers.

I would be very grateful if you **consider** my application and **give** me a chance to participate in the Erasmus programme at your university, enhancing my future professional and personal development.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Yours faithfully,

COVER LETTER – CORRECTING MISTAKES

Task 10 Look at the letter written by a student applying for an Erasmus Exchange stay. He made a few mistakes in the letter, the number of which is indicated in the parentheses at the end of each paragraph. Correct the letter.

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Jiří Nový and I am a graduated student of the Bachelor programme in International Relations at Masaryk's University in Brno, Czech Republic. (2 errors)

I write this because I would like to have the opportunity to spend the fall semester of this year at the prestigious Copenhagen Business School by taking part at the Erasmus Programme as a international exchange student. (3 errors)

I have decided to apply for Copenhagen Business School because the prestige of the university, my personal interest in the excellent courses offering by you and their relevance to my educational path, as I am currently studying economy. (3 errors)

In particularly, studying at CBS would give me the opportunity to further develop my knowledges in the field of economics so I can combine them with my language skills, as many courses offered at CBS have marked international contents, regarding emerging markets and international business. (3 errors)

For this reasons, I am strongly motivated to diligently attend classes and study at Copenhagen Business School, which I am considering the best choice for me as I think I would greatly benefit from the courses it offers. (2 errors)

Furthermore, I am persuaded that this experience would help me gain important new skills and competences. (1 error)

Thus, I consider me a good candidate to qualify for attending the 2013 fall semester at Copenhagen Business School as I am having the necessary skills, interest and personal motivation to fully benefit from such important opportunity. (3 errors)

Thank you for consider my application. (1 error)

Yours faithfully,
Jiří Nový

COVER LETTER WRITING

Task 11 Watch a video about writing cover letters at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0suKZ-oU8s>. Take notes while you listen and then write a summary of the video in about 50 words.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF CV WRITING

1) Be brief

- one or two pages only

- If your work experience is limited, describe your education and training first; highlight work placements during training
- If language skills are important for the position you are applying for, fill in the Europass Language Passport available on this site and attach it to the CV.

2) Be clear and concise

- Use short sentences.
- Concentrate on the relevant aspects of your training and work experience.
- Explain any breaks in your studies or career.

3) Adapt your CV to suit the post you are applying for

- Before sending, check that it corresponds to the profile required.
 - Do not include work experience or training which is not relevant to the application.
 - Highlight your advantages according to the specific needs of the prospective employer.
- Beware: do not artificially inflate your CV; if you do, you are likely to be found out at interview.

4) Take care over the presentation of your CV

- Set out your skills and competences clearly and logically, so that your advantages stand out.
- Pay attention to details such as spelling and punctuation.

NB:

- Print your CV on white paper.
- Retain the suggested font and layout.

5) Check your CV once you have filled it in

- Remove any spelling mistakes, and ensure it is laid out clearly and logically.
- Have someone read your CV so that you are sure it is clear and comprehensible.

Task 12 Write your own cover letter applying for the Erasmus Exchange programme stay in the country you would like to go to (this may be written anonymously).

HOMEWORK – Look at the Europass CV at <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/editors/en/#/cv/compose> and be ready to discuss an