



Tips for Writing your Volunteer Cover Letter

The cover letter for any job, paid or voluntary, gives the main points of your application, your background, and your reason for applying in a shortened way. Follow a clear format for each paragraph, and aim to keep your cover letter to one page only.

NOTE: Make sure your letter is all in the same font, and the same size. Choose a font size of 10, 11 or 12, depending on the font you prefer. Clear and easy to read fonts include: Times New Roman, Tahoma and Arial. You can format the page to 1.5 line spacing to make it easy to read. It should also always be in black.

The paragraph outline below shows what pieces of information you can include, and where they should go in the letter:

Title:

Write what the letter is about – applying for a voluntary position in a named school.

Paragraph 1:

Write why you are applying to the school, both generally and specifically. In general, you may want to apply for teacher training, but have no UK experience yet. You can mention the exact place you want to apply to. More specifically, the school may be close to you, or might be a specific type of school e.g. a focus on science. Mention something specific about the school in this paragraph. This will show you have done some research before approaching them.

Paragraph 2:

Write about yourself and your experiences. This should be based on your overseas and UK experience. Write for how long, when and where you taught. Also include any specialist activities you have done or particular skills you have, such as abilities in languages, sports, dance or other activities. In this section you should also stress your level of English, with proof where possible. This could include noting that the language of instruction in schools in your home country was English, or mentioning your highest English

language qualification. Even if English is your first language, the school may not know much about your home country, so still include this.

Paragraph 3:

Write in what position, for how long and how often you would like to volunteer. If you are flexible on which days you can volunteer, say so.

Paragraph 4:

Indicate that you are able to meet the contact person when they are available, and if you are happy to be contacted by phone as well.

Ending the letter:

You should sign the letter yourself, but also type your name below so it is easy to read.

As you are also giving the school your CV, write below your name the word "enclosed". This tells them the letter came with an accompanying document.

After you have written the letter, it is a good idea to get someone else to check it for grammar and spelling mistakes. Schools often receive a lot of applications, and they may not take time to read letters that have spelling mistakes or obvious grammatical errors.