

Formal letters

Decide which of the following features (1-8) a formal letter should have, then read the theory box and check. Find two more features in the theory box and add them to the list.

- 1 a personal, chatty style
- 2 very specific greetings/endings
- 3 everyday language
- 4 advanced language/vocabulary
- 5 set phrases
- 6 short forms
- 7 use of the passive
- 8 lots of phrasal verbs/idioms
- 9
- 10



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Theory box

Formal letters are characterized by:

- **formal greetings and endings**, e.g. *Dear Mr Barnes ... Yours sincerely* (when you know the person's name), *Dear Sir/Madam ... Yours faithfully* (when you don't know the person's name).
- **advanced/formal vocabulary/set phrases**, e.g. *I **am writing to apply** for the position of ...*
- **formal linkers/phrases**, e.g. *For this reason, therefore, however.*
- the use of the **passive**, e.g. *I can be contacted ...*
- the use of **full forms**, e.g. *I have always been interested in ...* (NOT: ~~I've always ...~~).

Formal letters don't use informal greetings/endings, everyday language/colloquial expressions, a lot of phrasal verbs/idioms, short forms or abbreviations.

A) Read the letter of application and answer the questions.

- 1** Who wrote the letter?
- 2** Why has she written it?
- 3** Who will read it?
- 4** How does it begin/end?

B) Match the paragraphs (1-4) with the headings below:

- opening remarks/reason for writing
- qualifications/experience/qualities
- when available for interview/closing remarks
- age/reason she wants the job

5 Society Street
Worthing WX3 GLR
28th April

Dear Mr Harris,

1) I am writing to apply for the position of Summer Tour Guide which was advertised in this week's edition of the 'Weekly Herald'.

2) I am 18 years old and in my final year at sixth form college. I am considering a career in the tourist industry after I leave college. For this reason, I would like to gain some valuable experience working with tourists.

3) I have 9 GCSEs, including Maths and English. I also have two years' experience working as a Saturday sales assistant, which I enjoyed very much. I speak some French and German and have a good knowledge of my local area. I am described by my teachers as enthusiastic, confident and reliable.

4) I would be available for an interview at any time. I have enclosed a copy of my CV. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

E Jones

Eleanor Jones

Read the letter again and find formal expressions to match the informal ones (1-8) below. Complete the table.

Informal Style

- 1 I want to apply for ...
- 2 I want to work ...
- 3 I've had a job as...
- 4 which was fun ...
- 5 I know the area well ...
- 6 I'm free to talk to you ...
- 7 Have a look at my CV.
- 8 Can't wait to hear from you.

Formal Style

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Look at the CV and complete the headings A-D.

Curriculum Vitae

A.

NAME

1.

ADDRESS

5 Society Street, Worthing

TELEPHONE

0184 84 75483

DATE OF BIRTH

22nd December 2001

NATIONALITY

British

B.

QUALIFICATIONS

2.

LANGUAGES

3.

C.

2017-2019

4.

D.

Good knowledge of local area,

5. ,, reliable.



You are a student at York University in England.

Read the rubric and find the keywords.

You have seen the following advert in the *Weekly Herald* and would like to apply.

Write your letter of application.

Include: why you would like the job,
why you think you would be good at it.

Part-time/weekend
SALES ASSISTANT
for city centre gift shop

Must be trustworthy and have a
friendly, sociable personality.
Would suit a student.

Please apply in writing to:

Simon Willis, PO Box 234.

Decide which of the following would be appropriate for a letter of application for this job.

- how many brothers and sisters you have
- previous work experience
- how many GCSEs/other qualifications you have
- where you saw the advert
- what you look like
- why you are interested in the job
- what pets you have
- your positive qualities
- negative things about your personality
- when you are available for an interview
- when you could start work
- what languages you speak
- your plans for the summer
- your age
- what you do/what you are studying

Part-time/weekend
SALES ASSISTANT
for city centre gift shop

Must be trustworthy and have a friendly, sociable personality.
Would suit a student.

Please apply in writing to:

Simon Willis, PO Box 234.

28 Leahurst Rd
York
YK13 SNL
4th September

Dear Mr Willis,

I am writing to apply for the position of Part-Time Sales Assistant which I saw in the newspaper I bought while I was walking my dog, Pedro, yesterday.

I am 16 years old, I am tall, and I have got long brown curly hair. I have got one sister, who I get on with very well. Although I don't have any experience of working in a shop, I want to work for you, I have had a regular babysitting job for a year now. I am trustworthy and reliable, but I can sometimes be a little impatient and moody.

I'm free to start work in July. I finish my exams at the end of May so I can't wait to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

A. Leary

Andrea Leary

a) Read Andrea's letter of application for the position of a sales assistant. Is it appropriate? Why (not)? Give reasons.

b) Read again and find the inappropriate parts. Re-write the letter so that it is more appropriate.

Top Tips for writing

1. If you know the name of the person you're writing to, use *Mr* for a man and *Ms* for a woman.
2. Start by saying why you are writing or what you are responding to.
3. Use indirect questions such as *I would be grateful if you could ...* to ask for information politely.
4. Use words like *Firstly*, *Secondly* and *Finally* to order your points.
5. Use this standard phrase to finish a formal letter or email.
6. If you've begun the email with *Dear* and the name of the person, finish with *Yours sincerely*. If you have used *Dear Sir or Madam*, finish with *Yours faithfully*.

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