

Cover letter essentials

Your first conversation with the school

The key distinction

A cover letter is **not a summary of your resume**. It is a tailored pitch connecting your skills and experience to this specific school and role.

The four-paragraph structure

1. Open clearly

State why you are writing, identify the full position title and say how you found the role. Be direct and professional.

2. Make the pitch

Refer to past and current achievements that relate directly to the role. Explain your teaching philosophy, skills and approach to learning.

3. Explain “why me?”

Show why you would be a genuine asset to this school specifically. Connect your strengths to what you found in your research.

4. Request action

Ask for the opportunity to discuss your application further. Express genuine enthusiasm and finish with a positive impression.

Research makes the letter stronger

Use the school website, annual report and newsletters to identify its community, priorities, programmes and language. The more your letter reflects the school's own priorities, the more convincing it will be.

What to connect

Your evidence	The school's priorities
Teaching placement	School programmes
Literacy or numeracy work	Community context
Inclusive practice	Improvement targets
Family or community work	Teaching approach
Relevant employment	Role requirements

Every word must earn its place. Keep the letter to one page.

COVER LETTER CHECK

Polish the package

A strong letter and resume should feel like one coherent application

5. Match your resume

Use the same font, headings, spacing and professional tone. The documents should look like a cohesive application package.

6. Keep it readable

Use plain white paper, no decorative backgrounds or borders, 10 to 12pt text, generous margins and comfortable line spacing.

7. Keep the tense consistent

Check that past experiences are written in the past tense and current responsibilities are written in the present tense.

8. Get an objective review

Editing tools can miss context-specific errors. Ask a careers adviser, mentor or trusted third party to read the whole application.

Before you send it

- ✓ Correct school and role named
- ✓ Opening explains how you found the role
- ✓ Examples are specific and relevant
- ✓ School language is reflected
- ✓ Request for action is clear
- ✓ Letter is no longer than one page
- ✓ Whole application is proofread
- ✓ Saved as a clean PDF

Avoid these common problems

A generic letter, a repeat of the resume, a letter addressed to the wrong school, unsupported claims, excessive length or a decorative format that distracts from your evidence.

Keep selection criteria separate

Many education roles ask for selection criteria as a separate document. Address each criterion individually rather than folding long responses into your cover letter.

Based on Crafting Your Path to Success session notes, presented by Switch Education.