

Cover Letter Rubric

	3 Cover letter invites employers to review your résumé.	2 Cover letter needs improvement to draw attention to your résumé.	1 Cover letter causes your résumé to be removed from the pile.	Score
Research	Cover letter clearly indicates that you reviewed the job description and company website to identify desired qualifications, skills, and abilities for the position. Cover letter has been specifically tailored for the position.	Cover letter mentions qualifications, skills, and abilities that are commonly desired in a given field. Cover letter is appropriate, but not specifically tailored for the position.	Cover letter does not reflect an understanding of the qualifications, skills, and abilities necessary to be successful in the position. It is evident that the applicant did not even read the job description.	
Introductory Paragraph	Introductory paragraph identifies the position for which you are applying and how you learned about the vacancy. If you were referred by a faculty member, relative, or current employee, note his or her name.	Introductory paragraph identifies the position you are applying for. Paragraph does not include an explanation of how you learned about the vacancy.	There is no introductory paragraph OR introductory paragraph indicates interest in the wrong position or in a position in the wrong organization.	
Body Paragraphs (1-2)	Body paragraphs succinctly identify your strongest and most relevant qualifications, skills, and abilities and clearly state how they apply to the position. Keywords from the job description have been incorporated in these paragraphs to demonstrate a strong fit. Paragraphs expand on the experiences in which you developed relevant qualifications, skills, or abilities, providing clear examples that invite the employer to review your résumé. Paragraphs detail your passion for the organization, industry, or job duties.	Body paragraphs identify a few of your strongest qualifications, but do not state how they apply to the position. Paragraphs generally indicate previous work experiences, but do not entice employers to take a closer look at your résumé. There is no evidence of passion for the position or industry.	There are no body paragraphs OR body paragraphs have clearly been copied and pasted from another cover letter. Qualifications described are irrelevant or insubstantial.	
Closing Paragraph	Closing paragraph thanks the employer for their time and consideration. Paragraph reinforces your desire to work for the organization. Paragraph may include a specific time period in which you will follow up to meet and discuss the position. Contact information is provided again for clarity.	Closing paragraph thanks the employer and mentions intention to follow up at a later time. There is little to no evidence of passion to work for the company.	There is no closing paragraph OR closing paragraph does not indicate any future intention to meet and discuss the position or thank the employer.	
Mechanics	Cover letter has no capitalization, spelling, or grammar errors. Applicant has carefully proofread the letter, and sought review from the Career Center to ensure an error-free document.	Cover letter contains a few minor capitalization, spelling, or grammar errors, but a consistent pattern is observed. Cover letter is readable, but "attention to detail" is no longer one of your selling points.	Cover letter has glaring capitalization, spelling, or grammar errors. A persistent pattern of errors is distracting, making the letter difficult to read.	
Formatting	Cover letter has been formatted using the appropriate business letter format. Your contact information, date, and the employer's contact information are located at the top of the letter. The letter has been addressed to a specific person, Human Resources Manager or Search Committee. Your signature is found at the bottom of the letter, along with the word, "Enclosure," which indicates that your résumé and references are included. Margins should be no smaller than a half inch, and font size should be 10-12 point.	Cover letter has been formatted incorrectly. Contact information is missing. The letter has been addressed "To Whom It May Concern." A comma follows the addressee instead of a colon.	Cover letter does not appear to follow any format. One or more paragraphs are missing. The letter has been addressed to an individual in the wrong organization.	
			Total	