

Cover Letter

Purpose: A cover letter and resume (or sometimes just a resume) are often needed when applying for a job or an internship. The Hawaii DOE would like all students prepared with a cover letter and resume as they move into the workforce. Although students will have to modify the cover letter and resume for a real job/internship, modifications should be minimal if what they create now is of good quality and accurate.

Why are we picky? (Question often asked by students)

We've talked with managers and human resource people from various companies over the recent years. The rubrics were created with their suggestions in mind.

As they've told us, they may get a hundred or more applications when they advertise job openings. They are glancing through the cover letters and resumes very quickly. A poorly written one or one with many errors is quickly tossed to the side.

Castle HS **COVER LETTER RUBRIC** (revised 01.2023)

Category	Meets Proficiency	Needs Improvement
Format Exceeds - ___ Reader's name and position used appropriately in reader's contact information and greeting.	___ Cover letter is word-processed.	___ Cover letter is not word-processed.
	___ Font is appropriate for a business letter, not too small or too large, and easy to read.	___ Font is not appropriate for a business letter, is too small or too large, and/or difficult to read.
	___ Cover letter is organized into clear paragraphs.	___ Cover letter is not organized into paragraphs.
	___ Cover letter's appearance is balanced; even spacing between paragraphs.	___ Cover letter's appearance is not balanced; spacing is uneven.
	___ Cover letter uses a business letter format, which includes date, addresses of both the writer and the reader's organization, greeting, and closing. Addresses include city, state and zip code. (Most common business letter format is TOTAL LEFT MARGIN alignment)	___ Cover letter does not use a business letter format or is missing the date, writer's complete address, reader's complete address, greeting, or closing.
	___ Cover letter is signed in the appropriate location. (Mock electronic signature is acceptable)	___ Cover letter is not signed or signed in the wrong location.
	___ Cover letter has, at most, two spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors.	___ Cover letter has more than two spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors.
Introduction	___ The entry-level employment position or internship is clearly stated.	___ The entry-level employment position or internship is not stated.
	___ Writer is currently NOT working for or interning at this company or organization.	___ Writer is currently working for or interning at this company or organization.
	___ An explanation describing why the writer is interested in the job/ internship/this company and/or what the writer can contribute is included.	___ An explanation describing why the writer is interested in the job/ internship/this company and/or what the writer can contribute is not included.

Castle HS COVER LETTER RUBRIC (continued)

Category	Meets Proficiency	Needs Improvement
<p style="text-align: center;">Skills and Experiences Related to Position</p>	<p>___ At least two skills/experiences of the writer are stated.</p>	<p>___ Less than two skills/experiences of the writer are stated.</p>
	<p>___ Clear descriptions explaining how the writer demonstrated the skills/experiences are included.</p>	<p>___ Clear descriptions explaining how the writer demonstrated the skills/experiences are not included.</p>
	<p>___ Skills/experiences relate to the entry-level position.</p>	<p>___ Skills/experiences are not related to the entry-level position.</p>
	<p>___ Skills/experiences are from the writer's high school years.</p>	<p>___ Skills/experiences are not from the writer's high school years.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Closing</p> <p>Exceeds: ___ The letter states how the writer will follow up with the reader in a stated time period.</p>	<p>___ Writer thanks the reader for his/her time and/or consideration.</p>	<p>___ Writer does not thank the reader for his/her time and/or consideration.</p>
	<p>___ The letter states how the reader can contact the writer for follow-up.</p>	<p>___ The letter does not state how the reader can contact the writer for follow-up.</p>
	<p>___ Contact information (phone number and/or email address) is provided within the closing section of the letter.</p>	<p>___ Contact information (phone number and/or email address) is not provided within the closing section of the letter.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Overall Information</p>	<p>___ Date of letter and grade level of writer, if mentioned, reflects the writer's final year in high school.</p>	<p>___ Date of letter and/or grade level of writer, if mentioned, does not reflect the writer's final year in high school.</p>
	<p>___ Information, such as reader's information, is accurate.</p>	<p>___ Information is not accurate.</p>
	<p>___ Reader is not listed as a reference in the resume.</p>	<p>___ Reader is listed as a reference in the resume.</p>