

A. Informal Letter

University of New York
New York

10 July 2016

Hello Mom and Dad

After a long and tiring journey, I reached today in the University campus. I did not find much difficulty in locating the campus and the Humanities Block as everything was beautifully described in the University advertisement.

I am sharing my accommodation with one Sri Lankan student. Just now I met one faculty member and she seemed to be very cordial. The campus is huge and clean and gives an academically healthy feel in the first go. Classrooms are spacious with multi-media facilities.

I am very excited about my classes which will begin from Monday onwards but I am missing both of you. I am missing even Kanishka who keeps on combating with me all the time. Please convey Mom that I love him so much, my lil Bro!

I shall keep you updated.

Both of you take good care!

Love

Namya

B. Formal Letters

Write a letter to the Principal of a college asking for some information related to admission

1057- Sector 10, Allahabad

Uttar Pradesh

E-mail: namya@gmail.com, Ph. 099999-12340

Date: 10 September 2016

The Principal

National College

Delhi

Request to Get Some Information Related to Admission related Information

Madam

I have passed my class 12th examination this year scoring overall 75 % marks in all subjects and the percentage of best four papers is 78%. I wish to seek admission in National College in Humanities for which I need your assistance in getting some information. I have checked the website of the college but still I could not get clarity about a few points.

I would be grateful to you if you can provide me the status of your BJMC course whether it is approved by the UGC as a regular course or is it a course in self- finance mode. I am very keen to take admission in this course when the admissions open in the college.

Kindly respond me by email at namya@gmail.com so that I can take appropriate decision regarding my admission in this course.

Looking forward to an early response.

Sincerely

Namya Malik

Namya Malik

- What action is required of the recipient (what)
- How the recipient will react, therefore, how to convey (how)

This type of thorough planning will help the writer of a letter to get the desired result, that is, if one is applying for a job, the recipient is convinced; if it is a complaint letter, the complaint is attended; if a suggestion is given, it is implemented; if one wants a train ticket cancelled, it is cancelled; if one wants to resolve an issue, it is resolved and so on and so forth.

Activity 3

You have to appear for a National Competitive Test. Your teacher also has scheduled an internal assessment test on the same day. Since you must participate in the National Competitive Test, write a letter of apology to your class teacher giving the reasons for your absence from the class on that particular day and request her/him for a retest, if possible.

Format: Parts of a Formal Letter

1. **Heading:** The name and address of the sender comes at the top of the letter whether it is an individual or an organisation. In the case of organization's name and address, generally printed letter-heads are used where this part is printed in the centre. This part is also termed as 'Return Address' which means the receiver of letter knows whom and where to respond.
2. **Reference No.:** It is the number which is specific to a letter. It helps in locating the letter at a later stage. This number, along with date, makes it a very specific identity of a letter.
3. **Date:** In the age of global businesses and multi-national communications between companies, different formats of date writing are used in various countries but for our context in normal usage we follow 'dd/mm/yyyy' format of date but for official purpose we adopt any one of the following styles for date writing:
 - 28 September 2016
 - September 28, 2016
 - 28th September 2016

All these styles are correct but the first one is more prevalent these days.

It can be left aligned or right aligned as per the format chosen.

4. **Inside Address:** It is the name and address of the receiver of the letter. These days organizations use cover envelopes with cuts at the place of inside address and the paper is folded in such a way that the inside address becomes the outside address also.
5. **Subject line:** It is a brief one line about the subject of the letter whether it is applying for a job or complaint of a damaged product or submission of a proposal. The subject line should convey the purpose of the letter at the first glance.
6. **Salutation:** Commonly used 'Sir/ Madam' (when there is no previous interaction) or 'Dear Sir/Dear Madam' (when there is previous interaction) (No 'mam' please).

If the writer knows the receiver, then the address like 'Dear Mr.Khanna' or 'Dear Ms. Malik' can be used for Rajiv Khanna and Namya Malik respectively. When you are using the name of the addressee, please address by the first name (Surname) only as given in the examples. Do not write as 'Dear Mr. Rajiv' or 'Dear Ms.Namya'.

Note: These days it is more customary to use 'Ms.' for any woman-married or unmarried' in place of the distinct address 'Miss' and 'Mrs.'.

7. **Body of the Letter:** In fact, the body of any letter can be divided in three parts:
 - a. **Introduction or Opening Para:** Where you write about the context/background of the letter and introduce the topic of correspondence.
 - b. **Details of Body or Main Para:** This is the main part of the body where the writer can give the details of the content to be conveyed. This is also the part where the writer has the maximum choice to showcase his/her talent of writing.
 - c. **Conclusion or Closing Para:** This is the section of body where the writer focuses on the action required from the recipient of the letter- early reply, meeting in person, consider as a candidate, sanction the leave, and approve the proposal and so forth. Closing should be very effective to get the desired action done.
8. **Complimentary Close:** After the closing para, the letter does not end abruptly rather the phrases like 'yours sincerely', 'yours truly' are used before the signature slot. Salutation and Complimentary Close are related. If the salutation has been at a more personal level, like Mr. Jacob' the complimentary close will also be more personal like 'Truly' or 'Yours truly'. (Only the first letter of the first word is written capital.)

9. **Signature Slot:** This part carries the signature, name and designation of the sender. This part provides authenticity to the content and fixes accountability on the writer. The parts after 'Signature Slot' are not compulsory parts of a letter. They can be used, if required.
10. **Reference Initials:** Some organizations prefer the signatures of other personnel involved in dictating or typing of a letter which helps them to locate easily in future who typed, etc. It increases accountability.
11. **Enclosures (Encl.):** They are just like attachments in e-mails. Any additional documents attached with the main letter are listed in this part.
12. **Courtesy Copies (C.C.):** When copies of letter are sent to more than one recipient (the addressee), it is detailed in this part. The name and designation of the person is written. In the days of use of carbon papers for making copies, they used to be carbon copies. Sometimes the word 'Distribution' is also used followed by 'To' in the next line and then the names and designations of other recipients like the following:

Distribution

- iii. Mr. Kamal Nagpal, Administrative Officer
 - iv. Mr. Pankaj Dua, Accounts Officer
13. **Post Script (P.S.):** As the words indicate, it is the 'script' written after the letter has been completed. When the writer of the letter realises that s/he has completed the body but some vital information is left out, it can be written in P.S. as is in the following example:

P.S.: The timing of the meeting has changed from 11:00 AM to 03:00 PM on 17 November 2016.

Activity 4

Recently you have been chosen the Best Student of the Year by a committee chaired by the Principal of your college. The criterion for this award included a good academic record along with exemplary participation in extra and co-curricular activities of the college. Write a letter to the principal thanking her/him for the singular honour bestowed on you as there must have been a number of other eligible candidates for the award.

Format of an E-mail

An e-mail can be divided broadly in three parts: Heading, body and Closing, and the format of an e-mail will look like the following:

Part A

To

Cc

Bcc

Subject: (The same as in a letter)

Part B

Greeting (The same as in a letter)

Message in three parts: (The same as in a letter)

1. Introduction of the topic
2. Details of the message
3. What action is required

Part C

Closing

Formal closing like 'Sincerely'/ 'Thanking you'

Full name and designation

Electronic signature or logo as per company's policy

Name of your organisation or company with full details- phone number, website, etc. (which in a letter comes at the top)

Full Block Format

234 English Communication

Company Letterhead
Name and Address already printed
Telegram, cable, telex, telephone, fax

Reference No

Date

Inside address

Attention line

Salutation

Subject _____

Body of Letter

Subscription

Signature

Signatory's typed name

Signatory's position in the company

Company Name

Enclosure

P S

*Ref. Initials

Modified Block Format

Letter Writing 235

Company Letterhead
Name and Address already printed
Telegram, cable, telex, telephone, fax

Date

Reference No.

Inside address

Attention line

Salutation

Subject

Body of Letter

Subscription

Signature

Signatory's typed name

Signatory's position in the company

Company Name

Enclosure

P.S.

*Ref. Initials

Vocabulary which Helps

Although a formal letter is structurally divided into different parts, the body of letter must have the basic ingredients of writing- cohesion and coherence about which you have studied in Chapter II.2- Features of Writing in detail. The body of a letter must be a cohesive whole with the vocabulary connecting various bits of information. Let us have a look at some words and phrases for different parts of a letter which will help in writing a letter:

- Salutation

Sir/Madam (In usual cases when interacting for the first time.)

Dear Sir/Dear Madam (When the writer is acquainted with the receiver)

Dear Mr...../ Dear Ms..... (When the writer and the receiver are on personal terms)

- Body-Introduction- Opening Para

With reference to the..., In response to..., As per our telephonic conversation,

Apply for, inquire about, comment on, apologise for, inform,
I would be delighted, I am pleased,

- Body- Details- Main Para

Transition words like 'Therefore, In addition to, Moreover, Firstly, Secondly,...., are helpful in joining various bits of information. They help in carrying forward the points to be conveyed.

- Body- Closing- Closing Para

Looking forward to hear from you; In case of further queries, please feel free to contact me;

- Enclosing Remarks

I am enclosing; please find enclosed;