

HINTS & TIPS FOR COVERING LETTERS & CV'S

Please note that some Firms will ask you to complete an application form as part of their recruitment process. If this is the case, there is no need to submit a CV as well. To save yourself time, it is worth researching in what format Firms are receiving applications.

Covering Letter

- Ensure that your letter is addressed to the correct person and the correct Firm, ensuring that both are spelt correctly!
- State clearly what position you are applying for.
- Covering letters should be kept to one page.
- We do not need your autobiography. All the important information relevant to your application should be on your CV.
- Demonstrate you have researched the Firm, and why you would like to complete a Training Contract with that Firm.
- Include any information that you do not feel is appropriate to put on your CV but may be relevant to your application.
- Be wary if you are using a standard letter template that you have created for all your applications. Be sure to change the name of the Firm throughout your letter, and bear in mind that these tend to be easy to spot and do not show much effort in comparison to other applicants.
- Don't forget to sign your letter if sending it in through the post.

CV

If applying for a Training Contract, CVs should ideally contain:

- Personal Particulars – Name, Address (both home & term time), Telephone number(s), E-mail address, etc.
- Education & qualifications gained.
- Legal work experience.
- Employment history.
- Positions of responsibility that you have held.
- Information technology knowledge and experience.
- Relevant key achievements.
- Hobbies & Interests.

Ensure that your CV is clear and concise. Ideally, CVs should be kept to two pages. The layout should be easy to follow, with relevant dates included.

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General Points

- Don't use unconventional paper to try and attract attention. All CVs will be considered for their content - recruiters do not need to be blinded by fluorescent paper!
- Fancy borders and fonts are not required and can be distracting and make your CV difficult to read.
- Get somebody else to read your letter and CV. This is a double-check to ensure that what you have written makes sense and reads well to other people apart from yourself.
- Double check spelling and grammar throughout all documents.
- Don't use size 8 font to try and get more information onto your CV. It makes it very difficult for assessors to read. It also demonstrates that you struggle to select the important information to include within your CV.

Application Forms

- Be wary of copying generic responses from one application form to another. Responses should be tailored to the specific questions and/or firm.
- Make sure to read the question properly and ensure you answer the question asked, rather than the question you would like it to be.
- Make sure to answer the questions fully and provide relevant examples but be careful not to drift into storytelling and rambling. You need to be concise.
- Do not leave questions blank. Questions are asked for a reason.
- Proofread your form more than once and ask someone else to check it for you too. You will be responsible for drafting legal documents in the future and they will need to be accurate. Attention to detail is vital.
- At interview, you could be asked about anything that you have put in your application form. Make sure anything you include is factually correct.
- If a firm is using an application form as part of their recruiter process, unless asked, you do not need to submit a CV as well. More importantly, if it stipulates an application form on the website, don't just send in a CV after putting in your email that you have visited the website, as again this shows a lack of attention to detail.



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