

Address the recipient by his or her title and surname. If these aren't stated on the job ad, get in touch and ask. Never say 'To whom it may concern'.

123 Oak Grove
Southampton
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State clearly which position you are applying for. If the job ad gives a reference number, include it. Very briefly mention your most relevant qualification(s) for the position.

Ms Claire Jones
HR Manager
ABC Water Consulting
Nottingham
NG2 2XY

Say why you are applying to this specific job. An engineering graduate recruiter advises: 'Highlight briefly why you would be the right choice for the role and that you have taken time to understand the company.' Link the job requirements to your skills.

Dear Ms Jones,

Application for Graduate Water Treatment Engineer vacancy, ref A123

I am writing to apply for the Graduate Water Treatment Engineer vacancy advertised on targetjobs.co.uk. I have an MSc in Sustainable Waste Management from the University of Southampton and an MEng in Chemical Engineering from the University of Manchester. I am seeking my first role in the water industry and enclose my CV for your consideration.

I am attracted to the Graduate Water Treatment Engineer role at ABC Water Consulting as I wish to combine my knowledge of the waste management industry with my understanding of chemical processes and biotechnology developed on my undergraduate degree.

I wish to work for a consultancy as I particularly enjoy working on projects that provide a clear business benefit and am keen to have a high level of client contact. During a three-month placement with BioChem I produced a report outlining how the organisation could reduce the waste from its processes by 40%. On a one-year industrial placement with Eastern Electric, I produced a report on how by-products could be harnessed to create more energy, which is now being implemented. I have also completed an optional 'waste management in business' course at Southampton University, learning about business skills and functions, and have strong customer service skills developed through working as a Bartender and as a Customer Service Assistant.

During my time at Eastern Electric my work formed the basis of the company's first corporate social responsibility report, something I note ABC has a strong record in given its volunteer programme. In the summer following my first year as an undergraduate I spent three months as a volunteer on a charity programme in Mozambique, designing and constructing irrigation tunnels.

I have a basic understanding of InfoWorks CS, strong programming ability in C# and Java, and good working knowledge of Excel.

I am available for an immediate start and able to attend an interview at any time.

Yours sincerely

Benjamin Jefferies

'The covering letter should be a chance to add clarity and detail to certain points on your CV', explains our graduate recruiter, adding: 'If the candidate has achieved something specific on work placements it is a good idea to highlight this.'

If you have additional, specific skills that are relevant to the job, mention them briefly here.

State your availability for interview and to start work.

'Yours sincerely' is the correct sign-off for a letter addressed to a named individual.