**Reference Letter Templates**

The following may be useful to cut and paste for reference letters onto the company letterhead.

**For student hours contributed**

Letterhead

 Month Day, Year

To Whom It May Concern,

This is to verify that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_assisted the Oakville Arts Council as a volunteer.

He/She contributed \_\_\_\_\_ hours of volunteer time, assisting with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Her contribution was greatly appreciated. \*\*

Please call if you have any questions at (XXX) XXX-XXXX ext. XXX

Kind regards,

Name

Title

Organization

\*\* You may wish to insert more details about the individual’s personal characteristics or strengths here.

**Sample Reference Letter**

#1

To Whom it May Concern:

Kathleen Doe volunteered for four years in the Women's Health ward at ZBD Community Hospital. During this time, she was a dependable volunteer who never missed a shift.

Kathleen was an asset to the hospital. She was always cheerful and willing to assist with any task. In addition, Kathleen was motivated and interested in learning.

Kathleen is relocating due to family circumstances, and, unfortunately, we will no longer be lucky enough to have her services. She will be missed and I highly recommend her to any future employer or volunteer organization.

Sincerely,

John Smith

(Title Here)

#2

To Whom It May Concern:

This reference letter is for XXXXXX, who worked at the Oakville Arts Council for fourteen weeks, from XXXX until August XXXX.

Coming to the Oakville Arts Council through a Canada Summer Jobs placement, XXX worked as a Communications Assistant reporting to me.  I had the opportunity to observe XXXX enthusiastic and intuitive approach to tasks assigned.

Showing tremendous initiative and demonstrating excellent problem solving skills XXX worked on the Oakville Arts Council’s inaugural *Guide to the Arts*.  Using a Mac computer, InDesign and Photoshop software his work was instrumental in the design and creation of the guide.

XXX anticipated the needs of the staff and worked very efficiently when given tasks.  He has a wonderful personality and was a real pleasure to work with. Both his professionalism and confidence are respected and I would recommend him without reservation.

If you would like to discuss this further, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXXX

**Tips on writing a reference letter**

As taken directly from <http://www.dailywritingtips.com/writing-a-reference-letter-with-examples/>

1. “Start using the [business letter format](http://www.dailywritingtips.com/how-to-format-a-us-business-letter/): put the recipient’s name and address, if known, and address them as “Dear [name]”. If the recipient is currently unknown (this would be likely on an academic application, for instance), then use “Dear Sir/Madam” or “To whom it may concern”.
2. It is often helpful to introduce yourself in the first couple of lines of your letter. The recipient will not need your life history: just give a brief sentence or two explaining your position and your relationship to the candidate.
3. Your next paragraph should confirm any facts which you know the candidate will be supplying along with your letter. For example, if you are writing a reference for a job applicant, some or all of these details may be appropriate:
	* The person’s job title and role within the company.
	* The person’s leaving salary when they were last employed by you (or your organization).
	* The dates which the person was employed from and until.

If you are writing a reference letter for an academic course, you will need to confirm the person’s academic grades.

1. In your third paragraph, you should provide your judgment upon the candidate’s skills and qualities. It is often appropriate to state that you would gladly re-employ them, or that their contributions to your college class were highly valued. Single out any exceptional qualities that the candidate has – perhaps their drive and enthusiasm, their attention to detail, or their ability to lead.
2. Where possible, use your fourth paragraph to give a couple of concrete examples of times when the candidate excelled. (You may want to ask the candidate to tell you about any extra-curricular projects they’ve been involved in, or invite them to highlight anything they’d particularly like you to include in the reference letter.)
3. Close your letter on a positive note, and if you are willing to receive further correspondence about the candidate’s application, make this clear. Include your contact details too.
4. As with any business letter, you should end appropriately; “Yours sincerely” when you are writing to a named recipient, and “Yours faithfully” when you do not know who will be receiving the letter.

**Things to avoid**

Make sure that you avoid:

* Mentioning any weaknesses the candidate has.
* Saying anything that could be construed as libel.
* Writing in an informal manner: keep the letter business-like. Jokes, slang and casual language are not appropriate and may harm the candidate’s chances.
* Including personal information not relevant to the application. Mentioning the candidate’s race, political stance, religion, nationality, marital status, age or health is usually inappropriate.
* Spelling mistakes, sloppy writing or typos: this letter is hugely important to the candidate, and you should take care to make it look professional.”