

# SSC CGL Descriptive Study Material Letter Format



# Format for Writing a Letter

## Sender's Address

This is the beginning of the formal letter. You must write the complete address in the right top corner of the letter. The address must be complete and clear. It must involve all the fields like House no/plot no, street name, city, state, postal code, etc. The address mentioned in the formal letter must be your postal address.

The intention of mentioning the Sender's Address in the formal letter is to let the recipient know the address for further communication.

## Date

The date is written just below the sender's address on the right side of the page. You can also write it on the left side of the page. You can notice the variation here. It is ok to write it on either side of the letter.

The date mentioned in the formal letter is the date of writing the letter. This is mentioned to keep track of the communication trail, and the formal letters are often kept for records. It is also easier to refer to a previous letter using the date.

## Receiver's Address

After the date is mentioned, leave some space and write the Receiver's Address. It is written on the left side of the formal letter.

### Use the following format to write the receiver's

Title. Full Name

Position

Address (No, Street Address)

City, State, Postal Code

You can also write 'To' before writing the address. It is a matter of choice and preference.

## Salutation or Greeting

The greeting is the opening of the conversation and redirecting the reader's awareness to the main message. It is usually a polite expression in the formal letter writing such as 'Dear Sir /Ma'am' or 'Respected sir /Ma'am'. You can also write their name with Mr./Ms/Mrs as a prefix. Writing the last name is preferred as you do not know them personally to use their first names. Do not get too personal while greeting as it is a formal letter, and the tone of the message must remain professional and business-oriented.

## Subject

A single line narrative with a brief and clear explanation of the matter of concern. You must limit the subject of the format letter to one line only. This tells the reader the purpose of the letter and message in a gist.

It is added in a center-aligned manner after the greeting. Use the following format,

'Subject: write your subject here'

## Body of the Letter

This contains the main information of your format letter. In a formal letter writing, this portion is often divided into 2-3 paragraphs

**Introductory paragraph:** You must give a brief of the problem statement or a quick idea of the intent of the letter.

For example, a complaint letter must contain order number details and brief about the issue.

**Main content body:** other relevant information to understand the message must be mentioned here. Try to keep the information as factual as possible and avoid using flowery language. You must stick to the information that is absolutely necessary to deliver the message.

Try to write clearly as your intention is that this letter delivers the message entirely. The tone of the formal letter must be highly professional, even when showing annoyance or



inconvenience. You must write in the first person and use a passive tone. Avoid abbreviations and usage of slang informal language.

**Conclusion:** This is the end of the main content of formal letter writing. It generally contains expectations, demand from the recipient, or anticipation. You must also add 'Thanking you' or 'warm regard' at the end of the paragraph in a center-aligned manner.

### Closing the Letter

At the end of the formal letter, you can close the letter with words like "Yours Faithfully" or "Yours Sincerely" on the right side of the letter.

### Signature

In the end, sign your name along with your name.

#### Layout for a formal letter

Sender's address and other contact info:  
 Email  
 Telephone  
 Fax

Date

Recipient's address  
 Reference number if available

Dear..... (If name is unknown use Sir/Madam)

- It may be appropriate to start with a reference line  
*Re:.....*
- Do not use contracted forms - write all words in full.
- Use formal standard English - no slang
- Keep sentences precise and get straight to the point
- Keep business letters focussed and do not waffle on!
- If complaining, be polite and use intelligent vocabulary.

Sum up your main point and state that you look forward to a response to your letter / query / complaint etc if appropriate.  
*Thank you, in advance, for taking time to respond to my ....*

Yours faithfully – (if greeting is to Sir/Madam)  
 Yours sincerely – (if name is given)

#### Layout for an Informal letter

Sender's address

Date

Dear.....

- You may have more than 2 paragraphs. Depending on who the recipient is you will have varying levels of informality.
- It is generally accepted that in informal letters contracted forms can be used: *can't* instead of can not; *haven't* instead of have not etc.
- You may also use a more colloquial language register – chatty tone that you might use in speech / mild slang words.
- Punctuation can be less formal: exclamation mark! used to signify shock or a joke; dashes - instead of commas; brackets used to separate additional ideas/references...

Degree of intimacy with recipient will determine the way you sign off:  
 Best wishes / Kind regards / Yours truly / With love...



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