

GUIDANCE ON WRITING A REFERENCE FOR AN APPLICANT (TO A UNIVERSITY COURSE)

If you have been asked to provide a reference for someone you know, either in your personal life or professionally, perhaps as an educator or an employer, please read the following guidance on what information you need to include.

If you are providing a reference for someone you know who is applying for a place on a course at university, this is a '**character reference**', details listed below on what information to include.

If you are providing a reference for someone you have taught or who has worked for you as an employee, this is a '**professional reference**', details listed below on what information to include.

Character reference

- How long you have known the applicant
- How you know the applicant (eg neighbour/friend/colleague)
- How you would describe the applicant's attitude to work and other commitments
- Using your knowledge of the applicant's personality, describe how you think they would perform academically
- Describe the applicant's personal characteristics and general suitability to undertake the proposed course of study

Professional reference

- Dates of the period you taught or employed the applicant
- How much involvement you had with the applicant during that time
- How you would describe the applicant's performance at work or during education
- If possible, how you would describe the applicant's academic ability
- Describe the applicant's personal characteristics and general suitability to undertake the proposed course of study

General information

- Sign and date your reference (we accept typewritten references, but it must be signed by hand)
- Make sure you provide your contact details: full name, address, telephone and email information
- If you are providing a **professional reference**, please do so on company or college letter headed paper
- If we have any queries regarding the authenticity of the reference, or if it is missing information, we will contact you directly
- Complete the enclosed declaration form
- Seal the reference and declaration form in an envelope and sign your name across the seal, write the applicant's name and course they are applying to on the front of the envelope.
- Return the sealed envelope to the applicant for them to include with their application form when they send it to us.

In considering applications, the University attaches great importance to the information provided in references and we would like to thank you for taking the time to assist us in our selection process.

Please indicate on the enclosed form whether you agree to a copy of your reference being released to the applicant upon request.

REFERENCE REQUEST DECLARATION FORM

For completion by the person providing the reference (and to be included with the reference in the sealed envelope).

Applicant Name:	
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Referee Name:	
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Date:	
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Please indicate below whether you agree to a copy of the reference being released to the applicant upon request.

- I agree** that a copy of this reference be provided to the applicant
- I do not agree** that a copy of this reference can be provided to the applicant

Please note that, under the rules of the Data Protection Act 1998, the University may have to provide the applicant with a copy of the reference you have written, if they formally request it, regardless of whether you have indicated above that you agree to the applicant being provided with a copy. If appropriate, information contained in the reference may also be used as feedback to the applicant. If such a request is received it will be discussed with you before action is taken.

PLEASE INCLUDE THIS SHEET WITH YOUR REFERENCE INSIDE THE SEALED ENVELOPE

For more information or advice, please contact us:

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