

# PERSONAL LETTER FORMAT FOR RIVERSIDE LOCAL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

## GENERAL FORMAT

The personal letter should be written in essay format, word processed in 12pt New Times Roman, double-spaced and **no more than two pages** in length. In general, refer to activities and achievements at secondary school (grades 9-12) only. **This letter should not be a "list" of accomplishments and activities (you have already done this on the application form)** but rather a connection between what you have done and where you are going, feelings and thoughts you have about these activities and the impact they have made on your life (who you are, not what you have done). You can focus on one or two important events. **Note: this is only a guide.**

### A. INTRODUCTION

Discuss academic goals and plans:

- who you are, what and where you are presently studying,
- your future plans and why you have chosen this particular direction/field of study
- what you think you have to offer in this area; e.g.

"As an educator I will be able to: \_\_\_\_\_"

Do not begin with "My name is Mary Jones. I was born in Port Coquitlam, B.C." Try to be as original as possible.

### B. PERSONAL HISTORY (give as much detail as possible)

1) Academic: start with grade 9; no need to mention elementary or middle school

- mention any particular accomplishments you have made, awards, etc. you have won and indicate what these achievements have meant to you
- indicate how your academic accomplishments have enlightened you
- Give an honest appraisal of your work in school including those courses you enjoy most, etc.

2) Non-academic: start with grade 9; no need to mention elementary or middle school

- how has your extracurricular and community involvement affected you and others (if applicable)
- be sure to describe any leadership activities in which you have been involved
- mention hobbies if they are relevant, e.g.: writing poetry, music, drawing, painting, fitness (not reading, walking or other passive activities)

3). Key life events or situations

Describe an event or situation in your life which may have helped to give you a focus or direction

4). Family background information

Describe how it relates to your future as a post-secondary student

### C. EMPLOYMENT/VOLUNTEER WORK

- indicate how you have benefited from employment or volunteer activities. Be as specific as possible. Don't hesitate to refer to a specific incident or event

### D. FINANCIAL NEED (if applying for bursaries)

- give any information that would indicate financial need without compromising confidential information about you and your family

### E. CONCLUSION

In your conclusion try to show a common thread in your life, i.e. an outlook, philosophy and set of goals that are reflected in your interests, abilities, hobbies, etc. You want the reader to hear a unique, interesting, human voice.

Some students choose to begin or end their personal letters with a favorite quotation.