

Self-Checking of Documents

Suggestions are from interactions with employers and from career resources shared by the National Association of Colleges and Employers to relate best practices. These opinions are to encourage quality documents. Students using this rubric are encouraged to make content and style decisions to relate their fit with their specific goal. Appointments are available for ETSU students using [NAVIGATE](#) or ETSU Alumni emailing: careers@etsu.edu.

Job Description Considerations	"Yes" is preferred in all areas →	YES
Includes a Job Description of a future position to help with this Handshake document review (Optional)?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Cover Letter – Format, Appearance, and Content Considerations		YES
Includes name, e-mail address, and phone number?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate length? (<i>One page is preferred</i>)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Free of any spelling, grammar, style, and punctuation errors?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Is it in a business letter format (full block, modified block, or indented format)?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Uses 1" margins (preferred for letters)?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the cover letter to an individual in a hiring position? (<i>If no specific individual is known, address the person as "Dear Employer:" or "Dear Hiring Manager:"</i>)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Near the beginning, does it state the purpose of the letter and the position sought?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Is it concise and specific about your goals and qualifications?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the description clear as to what you can contribute, not what you can get out of the organization?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the letter summarize key information, leading the reader to your Résumé for the details? (Rather than simply restating your Résumé)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the letter communicate actively, using strong action verbs, and avoiding contractions (e.g., I'd, didn't, it's)?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Sparingly uses sentences starting with "I"? <i>Instead, uses "This experience..." or "In this internship, I demonstrated..."?</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the cover letter tailored to the reader (focused), showing knowledge of the organization?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it demonstrate knowledge of the industry or profession? (Using job description and/or website information)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it convey enthusiasm and energy for the position?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it refer to personal qualities that are crucial to success in the field?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it share with the employer why they should hire you?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the letter state what you want next? For example, "Please contact me to arrange an interview by Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, FaceTime, phone or in person"?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it include a meaningful close before your name after concluding the body of the cover letter? <i>"Respectfully", "With appreciation", or "Thank you for your consideration," might be better than "Sincerely".</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>

As a suggestion, consider following-up after each application if you do not get a reply.

Résumé – PLEASE NOTE: Template Résumés can work if they are easy to review and focused		YES
1. NAME	TOP OF THE PAGE? (OPTIONALLY BOLDED)	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. PHONE #, EMAIL	Minimum of font size 10? (A mailing address is commonly included)	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. PERSONAL EMAIL	Is the email address professional and reflects positively for an employer?	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. LENGTH	One page (preferred), two pages (if needed), not exceeding three pages.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. OVERALL APPEARANCE	Does the document appear organized and easy to review?	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. MARGINS	At least ½" (minimal) or 1" (standard) margins?	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. BODY	Uses font sizes 10-12 for details shared in text areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. FORMATTING	Consistent using 1 or 2 font types, small bullet points, and with heading styles?	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. HEADINGS/SECTIONS	Evenly spaced? (Single spacing is often preferred to limit additional pages)	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. EXPERIENCES	Most recent experiences are shown first, based on ending dates?	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. STYLE	Avoids "I" and paragraphs for sharing details? (Bullet statements recommended)	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. DESIGN	Uses bolding/italics, images, and color sparingly. Résumé compliant?	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. ERRORS	No spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors. Résumé compliant?	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. CONTENT	No unnecessary info. (i.e., marital status, age, religion)? Résumé compliant?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Résumé	SUGGESTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OBJECTIVE or SUMMARY (optional) If included, it should be clear and focus on the specific opportunity. Often, this information is best shared in a cover letter. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DEGREE - ETSU Official Degree Title and graduation date should be accurate. 2024 – 2025 ETSU Majors (A-Z Index) at https://catalog.etsu.edu/content.php?catoid=58&navoid=3362 ETSU Minors and Certificates (A-Z Index) at https://catalog.etsu.edu/content.php?catoid=58&navoid=3586 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HEADINGS/SECTIONS - Consider using Education, Research, Project Experience, Additional Experience, Professional Development* (listing skills, certifications, software, training, etc.), and Community Involvement. Often Education or Experience will be placed near the top. * Teachers can use "Professional Abilities" (as a Professional Development alternative title). 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPA - This can be included with your current degree as an option. We encourage listing when it is 3.5 or higher. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EXPERIENCES - Relate valued Accomplishments and/or "Transferrable Skills/Abilities" Avoid using "Duties included..." or listing nonrelated responsibilities. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EXPERIENCE (SUPPORTING DETAILS) - For bulleted phrases, begin with past tense action verbs. Otherwise, use present tense <u>only</u> for current positions. Avoid "I" and use phrases. (Optional) May include quantification to relate more value. Ex: Increased survey completion rate by 14% over four months by applying follow-up procedures. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KEYWORDS - The Résumé should use keywords often found in current Job Descriptions or from Position Profiles. Please consider these resources to help: O*NET Position Profiles (using the Occupational keyword Search) at www.onetonline.org and similar Job Descriptions found using Job Search Engines like those shared on this UCS Website at www.etsu.edu/students/careers/links.php 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HYPERLINKS: Can display your work when hyperlinked to "LinkedIn" account or a hyperlinked "Portfolio", "Code Library", "Work Samples", or "Gallery". Sometimes included with contact information near your email address. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LANGUAGE USE: Uses powerful, precise language, as brief as possible? 	<input type="checkbox"/>
References Page – Format, Appearance, and Content Considerations	YES
Is it in a business letter style like your cover Letter – With your contact information at the top of the page?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate length? (<i>One page is preferred</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Free of any spelling, grammar, style, and punctuation errors?	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least three references? (These persons should expect to answer email surveys or phone questions about you)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shares good details like the person's Name, Professional Title <u>or</u> Former Professional Title (basic contact details)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shares the person's company name, City, State (basic contact details)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it share email addresses and phone numbers (basic contact details)?	<input type="checkbox"/>