



LETTERS OF REFERENCE

You often observe things like a student's punctuality, ability to work with others and how they confront challenges. In a strong field of candidates, these insights may provide an employer with important information that a GPA and resume can't always reflect.

For students with little or no professional experience, professors and co-op or internship supervisors become likely candidates to write letters of reference on the student's behalf.

What to include:

Letters are particularly effective when they relate directly to the skills necessary for a specific job or position. This may require that you meet with the student to discuss the desired placement prior to writing your reference. And while you will naturally want to present a student in the best possible light, it is important to present factual information, based on your own observations.

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), if you are asked to provide a reference, you should also consider these questions:

- Who will see this information?
- Is the person asking for a reference entitled to that information?
- What is the purpose of the information?
- Is the information accurate?
- Is the information misleading?

View a sample reference letter [here](#).

Discrimination Laws and FERPA

While most employers will not ask you to provide information that they can't lawfully request from the applicant, it is important to understand what information you can and cannot disclose. You can find additional resources through NACE, including:

- [Information about discrimination laws, FERPA and other suggested guidelines](#)
- [A Faculty Guide to the Ethical and Legal Standards in Student Hiring](#)