

Graduate School Reference Letter Checklist

Three months prior to your application deadlines, you should be gearing up to ask for letters of recommendation. Here are some useful tips to help you navigate successfully through this process.

- Ask for letters of recommendation from professors, advisors, employers, or coaches. Depending on your relationship with the person you are asking, you may want to ask for a recommendation in person, reintroduce yourself, or explain why you chose them as a recommender.
- Choose recommenders who can speak to your unique skills and experiences. Having a variety of recommenders can provide a more well-rounded view of you as a person and applicant.
- Provide recommenders with useful information about your experience and consider including specifics about what you hope recommenders might emphasize. You may want to share the following with recommenders:
 - An updated CV and Personal Statement
 - Information about programs you are applying to
 - Deadlines and submission instructions for each letter.

First, choose a maximum of three faculty members to write reference letters for you. Before proceeding, contact each of them to ensure they are willing to provide a strong letter.

Note: Deadlines may be earlier for students interested in applying for scholarships.

1. Create a form (spreadsheet or table) in which you include on the names of the universities, specific programs, and individual deadline dates. You can also include submission instructions.
2. Your personal statement: a one- to two-page document that includes your background, areas of interest, and perhaps your educational goals.
3. Your unofficial transcript (printed or saved as PDF). Transfer students (including 2+2) students may wish to include transcripts from all universities as some professors may request these.
4. Your Curriculum Vitae

Note: When submitting by email, please send one PDF file with your documents. Many professors prefer to see your final grades for the current term on your transcript. Please contact your referees to determine if this is required. Some professors may have their own reference letter instructions; if so, please follow their instructions.