

Instructions for “Explanation Letters”

What is an explanation letter?

An explanation letter is a personal statement you prepare in a letter format and attach it to your applications to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC); whether it is a study permit extension, post-graduation work permit or any other types. Your explanation letter will assist the officer to understand your situation better, have a clear picture of your circumstances and in the end to make their final decision.

Note: Remember it is always your responsibility to make sure you provide accurate information and to elaborate on facts. Just because you previously had an application it does not mean that the officer will look for the information or will contact you to follow up for further clarification or confirm the information with you. Yes, sometimes you may need to explain the obvious facts, repeat or re-send the information you had already submitted.

When to use an explanation letter?

You might notice there are facts about your circumstances that might be questionable by the officer and/or you need to bring them up to their attention. There are no defined situations when you “should” have an explanation letter. If you are in the following situations, it is advisable that you include an explanation letter with your application. Possible scenarios:

- Providing additional information
- Reminders of useful information
- Missing documents
- Expired documents
- Non-compliance with conditions and requirements
- Special requests
- Clarification or response to officers’ questions or concerns
- Taking a longer time to complete program of study
- Taking leaves from studies
- Having gaps in studies
- Change of program multiple times
- Unauthorized work
- Part-time enrollment
- And many other unique situations

In writing your letter, please consider these points:

- You need to explain your situation to make the officer understand your situation better.
- Be clear and comprehensive!
- You are addressing an issue or problem but it does not mean you need to remain negative throughout your letter.
- Maintain a positive attitude in your letter.
- Divide the subjects you want to explain into different topics.
- Use standard / correct written English (i.e. do not use slangs, abbreviations and “capitalized” words, and be respectful.
- In addition to the issue you are explaining, try to address your positive experiences in Canada and during your studies as well as your accomplishments and achievements during the time you have been in Canada.

Create a time-line so that the officer understands your situation by adding information about the following:

- What you have studied
- From what date to what date

This is not a legal document. The information here is a general guide to give you an idea how to write your explanation letter.

Please see <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/immigration-citizenship.html> to read the appropriate guidelines and instructions for preparing your application. (Updated on: July 15, 2022)

- Issues you want to explain
- Order of events that you want to explain
- The reason why you believe those events happened
- What you have done to resolve / improve the issues or challenges
- What are/were the outcome of your efforts to solve the problems

Note: Attach additional documents if necessary and submit in your online application under: “Optional Client Information”.

Sample Explanation Letter

Remember to change /delete the content of the sample letter according to your situation!

[Your Full name]

[Today's Date]

[Your Mailing address]

[Your Telephone: (area code) – (number)]

[Your Email address]

Re: UCI number XXXX-XXX [UCI number is on your document]

Dear Visa Officer,

I am applying for **[Input what you are applying for i.e. study permit extension, post-graduation work permit, etc.].** I am attaching this letter to provide explanation on the following:

[Divide the subjects you want to explain into different topics:]

Topic #1:

[Explain the situation as mentioned above.]

Topic #2:

[Explain the situation as mentioned above.]

[What is your request from the officer? Insert your request here]

I would like to request you to

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Truly,

[Your signature]

[Your name]

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