

Writing an Email

Matthew Williams • English Language • April 21, 2026

Structure

- **To** — recipient's name and email address
- **From** — your name and email address
- **Cc / Bcc** — additional recipients, if needed
- **Subject** — clear, specific summary of the email's purpose
- **Salutation** — Dear [Title] [Surname]: — colon for formal emails
- **Opening Paragraph** — state the purpose immediately; one or two sentences
- **Middle Paragraph(s)** — supporting details; one idea per paragraph
- **Closing Paragraph** — what you need the recipient to do next
- **Sign-off** — Best Regards / Yours sincerely, followed by your name and contact

Key Conventions

- Go **immediately to the business at hand** — no "I hope this finds you well"
- Write **short paragraphs** with a blank line between each
- Be professional and direct, but not blunt to the point of rudeness
- Use a **colon** after the salutation in formal emails, not a comma
- Keep the subject line specific — it should tell the reader exactly why you are writing

[Code: annotated-doc]

To | The recipient's full name and email address. | To: "[Recipient Name]"
<recipient@institution.edu>

To: "Professor Binns" <abinns@cartercollege.edu>

From | Your full name and email address. | From: "[Your Name]" <youremail@domain.com>

From: "Kerry-Kay Bogue" <boguekkk@xmail.com>

Cc | Other recipients who should receive a copy. Leave blank if not applicable. | Cc:
[Name(s) if needed] | optional

Cc:

Subject | A clear, specific subject line that summarises the purpose of the email in a few words. | Subject: [Specific description of the email's purpose] | break

Subject: Request for a Letter of Recommendation

Salutation | A formal greeting. Use a colon after the name – not a comma – in professional emails. | Dear [Title] [Surname]: | break

Dear Professor Binns:

Opening Paragraph | State the purpose of the email immediately. One or two sentences – go straight to the point. | Brief statement of purpose. What you are writing about and what you are asking for or communicating. | break

I am applying to the Cangu University in Kinshasa to pursue a degree in Gender Studies. If it is convenient, would you be able to write me a letter of recommendation?

Middle Paragraph | Provide the details the recipient needs to respond or act. Keep each paragraph to one idea. | Supporting details. Specific information the recipient needs – requirements, context, attachments, deadlines. | break

The application requires that the recommendation be addressed to the Dean of Studies, Professor Archibald Okoye. It should give a general overview of my record of academic performance, my character, and the extent of my involvement in the community. I have attached my curriculum vitae with an outline of my academic accomplishments and co-curricular involvement to give you some ideas for formulating the letter. The application is due on December 28, approximately five weeks from now.

Closing Paragraph | State clearly what you need the recipient to do next. Be specific about any deadline or follow-up required. | Specific action requested from the recipient. Any deadline or further information needed. | break

Please respond at your earliest convenience to let me know whether you agree to write the letter. If you agree, please let me know when you would be likely to complete it and whether you need any additional information.

Sign-off | A professional closing. "Best Regards" or "Yours sincerely" are both appropriate for formal emails. Followed by your full name. | Best Regards,\n[Your Full Name]

Best Regards,
Kerry-Kay Bogue

Contact | Your phone number or other contact information, placed below your name. | [Contact Number] | optional

876-555-0194