

Sample Documentation Letter Format

Dear Documenters:

The outline/format below is for your assistance – using this layout for your letter will help us greatly to evaluate the student’s learning. **Thank you!** *Melissa DeBlois, Director, Office of Prior Learning Assessment*

(Your letterhead, contact information and date here)

Address your letter to:

Melissa DeBlois
Director, Office of Prior Learning Assessment
Vermont State Colleges System
PO Box 489
Montpelier, VT 05601

If you find it helpful, use the sample/format below to compose your letter:

1. Name the student the letter is written for, e.g. “This letter of documentation is written on behalf of **Mary Doe** in evidence of college level learning acquired from experience.” (*This tells us exactly who the letter is for.*)
2. Explain which areas of study you are documenting for Mary, e.g.: “The area of study (or: areas of study, in case you document more than one area) of college type learning Mary has asked me to document, and I believe she should receive credit for is/are: “Working in a Professional Environment”, “Computer Applications”, and “Supervision.” (*This helps us to know exactly which statements go with which request.*)
3. Describe your own educational and professional background. Explain how you are qualified to judge Mary’s college level learning in these particular areas of study.
4. Describe how you know the student. State how you know Mary and what methods you are using to evaluate Mary’s learning; it could be through observation/supervision or an in-depth interview, etc.
5. Then, list each area of study separately and describe Mary’s specific skills, knowledge and competencies in your own words. Base your observations and statements on the “Learning Components” in the area(s) the student has asked you to document; they will give these to you. This is what the student has articulated as their knowledge and your letter is meant to confirm this or not.
6. Describe how well Mary performed by using statements such as average, above average, exceptional, etc. Be as specific as possible and use examples for the standards you are using, e.g.: “performed at the same level as others who hold a Bachelor’s Degree; exceeds other employees under my supervision who have college learning/degrees in that area; my interview/observation has convinced me they have college level learning; I have taken/taught that class myself and can therefore compare, etc.”
7. State clearly if it is your opinion that Mary should be awarded college credits in this area of study, or not.
8. Physically sign your letter and send a legible scan of the file to priorlearning@ccv.edu. If you prefer to submit your letter in hard copy, keep a copy for yourself and mail it directly to the Office of Prior Learning Assessment at the address above with YOUR return address on the envelope. If not using letterhead, please include your address, phone and e-mail in case we need to contact you with questions. The student will probably give you a timeline when they need to have the letter sent. **Do not send the letter directly to the student.** The Office of Prior Learning Assessment has to verify the receipt of the letter and will then send a copy of it to the student for inclusion in their portfolio.

This is a letter of documentation rather than a job recommendation. Your input and observations will verify that the student has described their learning accurately. It will guide and assist the faculty members who evaluate the student’s requests for credit.

If you decide not to write the letter, please let the student know so they can find another documenter in time for the portfolio deadline.

Thank you so very much for your efforts on behalf of our students! We sincerely appreciate your help.