

Technical Writing

Letter Writing

Semester 3 – Professional Communication Skills
(303193203)

Learning Objectives

- Understand the structure and format of professional emails and letters.
- Apply email etiquette in various communication scenarios.
- Draft formal and informal emails using appropriate tone and structure.
- Compose business letters such as inquiries, replies, and complaints.
- Improve clarity, conciseness, and professionalism in written communication.

Introduction

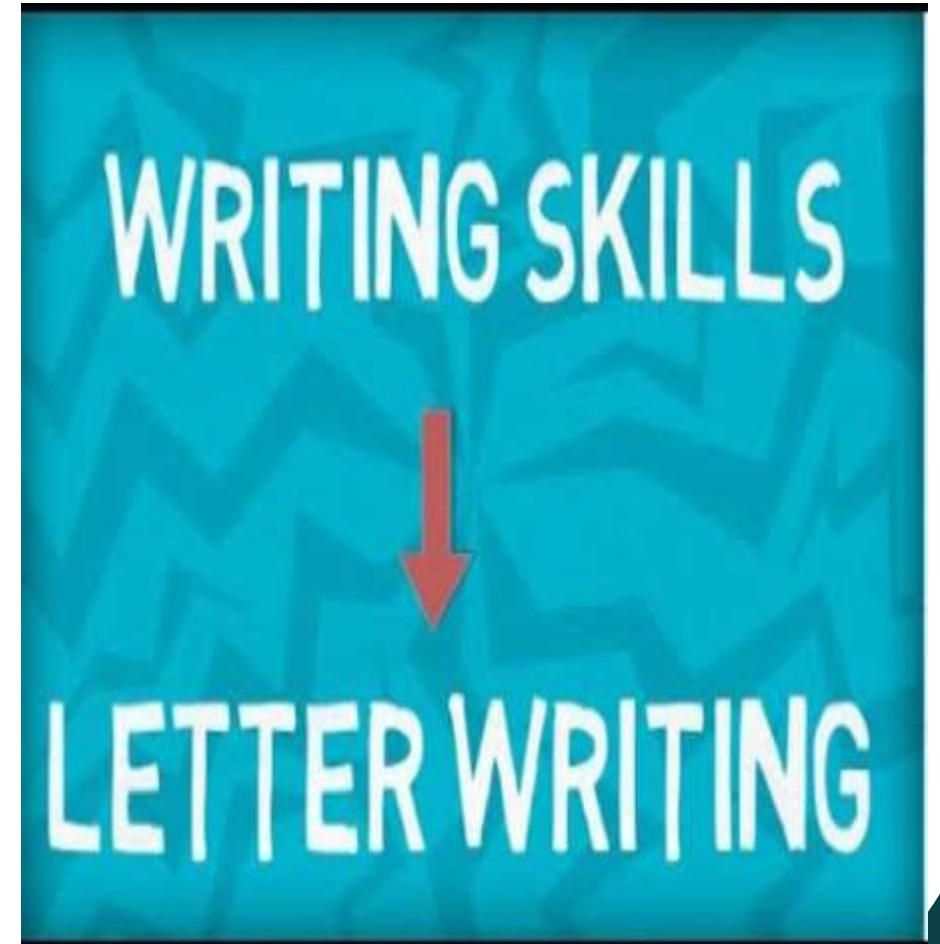
- Letters are formal tools of written communication in academic, professional, and business contexts.
- Understanding correct formats and etiquette is essential.
- Letters convey important messages and require clarity, tone, and structure.

Importance of Letter Writing

- **Builds professional image:** Formal communication shows that you are serious, respectful, and professional, helping to create a positive impression.
- **Used in job applications, inquiries, complaints, and official replies:** It is essential for communicating in formal situations like applying for jobs, asking for information, making complaints, or responding officially.
- **Provides a record of communication:** It keeps a written record that can be referred to later for clarity, proof, or follow-up.

Types of Letters

- **Inquiry Letter:** Requesting information
- **Complaint Letter:** Highlighting an issue
- **Reply Letter:** Responding to inquiries or complaints
- **Application Letter:** Job or internship applications



Structure of a Formal Letter

1. Sender's Address
2. Date
3. Receiver's Designation & Address
4. Subject Line
5. Salutation (e.g., Respected Sir/Madam)
6. Body (Intro, Details, Conclusion)
7. Complimentary Close (e.g., Yours sincerely)
8. Signature and Name

Mnemonic for Letter Format – SODARC

Letter	Meaning	Description
S	Sender's Address	Top left corner of the letter
O	Opening Date	Leave a line after address, write date
D	Designation/Receiver	Mention designation if known
A	Address of Receiver	Full postal address
R	Respected Salutation	Respected Sir/Madam
C	Content & Closing	Body (3 parts) and formal closing

Sample – Inquiry Letter

Topic: Requesting course brochure from an institution

- Sender's info
- Subject line: Inquiry Regarding Postgraduate Course Brochure
- Three-paragraph body: Intro, Request details, Thank you note

Sample – Complaint Letter

Topic: Complaint about defective product

- Formal tone
- Facts: Product details, issue experienced, expected resolution
- Polite yet firm language

Sample – Reply Letter

Topic: Response to an inquiry about hostel accommodation

- Acknowledge the inquiry
- Provide clear and structured response
- Include contact or follow-up details

Letter Writing Etiquette – Dos

- **Use polite and respectful language:** Maintain a courteous tone to show professionalism and respect.
- **Keep the content clear and concise:** Write simply and directly to ensure easy understanding.
- **Proofread for grammar and structure:** Check for errors to keep the message correct and professional.
- **Maintain logical flow (intro–body–conclusion):** Organize ideas clearly for smooth and effective communication.

Letter Writing Etiquette – Don'ts

- **Don't use contractions or informal words:** Use full forms and formal vocabulary to maintain a professional tone.
- **Avoid spelling errors and poor formatting:** Ensure correct spelling and proper layout for clarity and a polished appearance.
- **Don't be emotional or aggressive:** Keep your tone calm and respectful, even when expressing concerns or disagreements.
- **Avoid vague subject lines or unstructured content:** Use clear subject lines and organize your content logically to make your message easy to understand.

Activity 1 -Letter Correction Challenge

Instructions:

1. Give students a sample formal letter with intentional mistakes in tone, format, grammar, and structure.
2. Ask them to work in pairs or small groups to identify and correct the issues.
3. After 10–15 minutes, discuss the corrected versions as a class, highlighting key points on etiquette, clarity, and structure.

Activity 2 -Write and Swap – Purpose-Based Letter Writing

Instructions:

1. Assign each student or pair a different letter type (e.g., job application, inquiry, complaint, request for information, response to an official letter).
2. Have them write a formal letter using the correct format (sender's address, date, salutation, body, closing, signature).
3. Once complete, they swap letters with another pair for peer review, focusing on tone, clarity, structure, and etiquette.
4. Optionally, a few letters can be read aloud and discussed in class.

Conclusion

Recap of key points:

- Emails and letters are structured forms of written communication.
- Follow proper etiquette and use clear, concise language.
- Formal and informal formats differ in tone and content.
- Use mnemonics like SODARC to remember structure easily.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this two-hour session, students will be able to:

- Understand the importance of formal letters in academic, professional, and business contexts.
- Recognize and apply correct formats, tone, and etiquette in formal letter writing.
- Draft clear and well-structured formal letters for various professional purposes.
- Identify common mistakes and improve written communication through peer feedback and self-correction.

Thank You