

Structure and content of a letter of recommendation for students

Introduction

In this part the lecturer explains where and for how long he or she knows the student as well as some positive events that he or she can remember.

Example: "Mrs. X has been attending seminars and lectures with me since 2015, and I have noticed her right from the start because of her very intelligent contributions/excellent papers/homework/assessments. In particular, I remember her presentation on the subject ... which exceeded my expectations by far."

Academic Achievements

Academic Achievement will be assessed as objectively as possible and, if possible, set in relation to the level of performance during the lecture and in relation to other students.

Example: "Mrs. X is one of the best students of her year. Her achievements/diplomas/preliminary examinations/results are always in the upper X percent." Or: "She has completed her intermediate diploma in a very short time, but has not only completed the prescribed minimum number of courses, but... and also completed it with above-average grades."

Personal and social skills

In this part, the lecturer should provide information on intelligence, professional competence and suitability to the program. As a rule, no secondary virtues such as diligence or personal interests are emphasized.

Example: "My personal impression of Mrs. X was always very positive. I consider her to be a very intelligent and committed/analytical/ very talented/ technically competent student and I am sure that she will finish her studies with great success soon."

In addition, it is possible to assess social skills that can be developed from certain tasks.

Example: "I would also like to add that Ms. X is a responsible and likeable person who is well integrated into her semester/working group/institute. She took over tutorials early on, chaired student committees, represented student concerns expertly and has always attracted positive attention in all committees."

If the student is applying for a scholarship/application for funding, an appraisal of the proposed project would make sense.

Example: "Her financial situation is precarious due to family problems; I see the timely completion of her Master's thesis at risk, if she is not supported by scholarship."

Conclusion

The end of the letter of recommendation should be a very clear assessment of the described person and summarize the points mentioned briefly and concisely.

Example: "I therefore have no reservation in strongly supporting her application for the scholarship as this would enable her to concentrate on the development of her thesis and successfully finish her studies."