

How to Write a Formal Email (Class 13 – Abitur)

What is a Formal Email?

A **formal email** is used for professional or official communication, for example:

- contacting a company
- applying for an opportunity
- making a complaint
- requesting information
- writing to a school or organisation

The aim is to communicate **clearly, politely, and professionally**.

Structure of a Formal Email

1. Subject Line

The subject should be **short and specific**.

Examples:

- ✓ *Application for Student Internship Programme*
- ✓ *Request for Information About Exchange Programme*
- ✓ *Complaint Regarding Online Course Materials*

Avoid:

- ✗ *Question*
- ✗ *Important*

2. Greeting

Use a formal greeting.

If you know the name:

Dear Mr Smith,
Dear Ms Johnson,

If you do not know the name:

Dear Sir or Madam,

Avoid:

✗ Hi

✗ Hello

3. Introduction

Purpose: Explain why you are writing.

Useful phrases:

- I am writing to enquire about...
- I am writing regarding...
- I would like to express my interest in...
- I am contacting you because...

Example:

I am writing to enquire about the possibility of participating in your international exchange programme.

4. Main Body

Organise your information into clear paragraphs.

Paragraph 1: Explain the Situation

Give relevant background information.

Example:

I recently came across your advertisement for a student internship programme and would like to receive further information about the application process.

Paragraph 2: Give Details / Make Your Request

Explain:

- what you need
- questions you have
- relevant information

Useful phrases:

- I would appreciate it if you could...
- I would be grateful for further information regarding...
- Could you please clarify whether...

Example:

Could you please provide information about the required qualifications and the application deadline?

Paragraph 3: Additional Information

Add:

- experience
- reasons
- suggestions
- possible solutions

Example:

As I am particularly interested in intercultural communication, I believe this programme would be a valuable opportunity to develop my skills.

5. Conclusion

End politely.

Useful phrases:

- I look forward to hearing from you.
- Thank you for your time and consideration.
- I would appreciate your response at your earliest convenience.

6. Closing

Formal endings:

If you know the person's name:

Yours sincerely,

If you do not know the person's name:

Yours faithfully,

Then write your name.

Formal Email Language

Formal alternatives:

Informal	Formal
I want to ask	I would like to enquire
I need	I require / I would appreciate
Tell me	Please provide information
I think	I believe / I would argue
Thanks	Thank you for your assistance
Get	Receive / Obtain

Avoid:

✗ Short forms:

- can't → cannot
- don't → do not

✗ Informal phrases:

- Thanks a lot
- I want to know
- Let me know

✗ Emotional language:

- I am extremely angry

Use:

I am dissatisfied with the service provided.

Formal Email Checklist

- ✓ Clear subject line
- ✓ Correct greeting and closing
- ✓ Purpose stated in the introduction
- ✓ Polite requests
- ✓ Formal vocabulary
- ✓ Logical paragraphs
- ✓ No slang or contractions
- ✓ Appropriate tone for the reader