

Help sheet: Writing a letter to your MP

Step 1: Research

Find out who your political representative is and his or her contact details at www.theyworkforyou.com. This website also enables you to monitor your political representative's participation in the UK's parliaments and assemblies.

Learn more about the role of your MP by playing the 'MP for a Week' game [here](#).

Learn about the issue you wish to write about. Political representatives are rarely experts on everything so it's much more important to be broadly well informed and accurate than to be an absolute expert. Most MPs are delighted to engage with young people given the widespread concerns about declining political participation among the UK public. Your letter is an indicator for what 'the people' think and will help build a picture of a constituency that is interested and concerned. This makes your MP sit up and listen.

Having researched your issue you will have lots of material to make a great letter. Start by mind-mapping what you have learnt.

Step 2: Introduce yourself

Start your letter by introducing yourself.

Step 3: Explain the issue

You should then introduce the issue and what you would like your MP to do. It is useful to include 3-5 core points. Which things stand out in your mind map? Use these to form the body of your letter. Explain why you feel passionately about your chosen issue. Present your reasons clearly, concisely and specifically, but do not exceed one page.

Step 5: Action

Restate at the end of the letter what you hope your MP will do. Send it and wait for a response.

Next steps?

Now you've built a relationship with your MP invite them to a meeting. For example, the annual 'Send My Friend to School' campaign provides a context and support for young people to meet their MPs face to face – visit www.sendmyfriend.org. There are tips for organising an MP visit [here](#).

Top tips

MPs receive 200-300 letters per day so it's important to:

- Be brief (1 side or less)
- Be clear (aim to cover 3 key points)
- Be yourself, but don't be gimmicky or sensational
- Ask your MP to do something that demonstrates their support (eg: write to the relevant minister)
- Use excellent punctuation and grammar.