

REFERENCES

A reference is a statement written by someone commenting on your:

- **Character** (this is known as a personal reference)
- **Work** (this is known as an employer or work reference)
- **Education** (these are school, education or academic references)

PERSONAL REFERENCE

This is a reference written usually by a “person of standing in the community”, who knows you well enough to comment on your character. The purpose of this sort of reference is to show that someone responsible who has known you (or your family) for some years is prepared to say that you are likely to be an honest and reliable worker.

The sorts of people to approach for such a reference would be members of parliament or local councils, religious leaders (priests etc), bank managers, leading businessmen and women, senior public servants, members of the police force, justices off the peace, people active in the community, people involved in organising sports clubs, and social or welfare workers. They cannot be a relative of yours.

WORK REFERENCE

These references obviously carry the most weight when someone is considering employing you:

- they are keen to know what previous employers thought of your ability, attitude and motivation, how you got on with your workmates and what your actual duties entailed.
- If you haven't had a full-time job before, references from people who have employed you on a casual or part-time basis are still very worthwhile.

It is always worth requesting a reference from someone you have worked for, even if they have only employed you on a casual or part-time basis. Be sure to get the reference as soon as possible after leaving the job. Often it can be hard to track people down a few years later when you discover you need a reference.

If people are hesitant about giving you a written reference, ask if you can give their name as a referee. That way if you need a reference, you can give their name to a prospective employer should the need arise.

SCHOOL REFERENCE

All schools give a School Reference when you leave school. However, you may request a Principal's report before that if needed. Some teachers may also be willing to write a personal reference – you can only ask.

** Never give an employer the original reference, or any other document. A good copy will almost always be adequate.*

