

## TOOLKIT FOR M.S. in ACCOUNTANCY STUDENTS

Use this toolkit as a specialized, convenient resource with updated business and career information relevant to your graduate business degree, education, skills and ongoing career management.

Start here: [Quinlan Graduate Business Individual Career Progression Plan](#)

Get a quick overview of the career picture and customize it by setting timely SMART goals for yourself!

### SCROLL DOWN for high-impact details in this multi-page toolkit including:

- ✓ **Important career resources (online and accessible)**
- ✓ **Key components of a cover letter and sample correspondence (great for emails also!)**
- ✓ **Key components of a professional resume and sample resumes to get you moving**
- ✓ **Relevant job titles and key professional organizations**
- ✓ **Interview preparation tips and questions for virtual and in-person interviews and calls**

### Your Top Key Quinlan Career Resources

[Handshake](#) – Start with Loyola University Chicago’s interactive career management tool that connects students and alumni to employers. Read descriptions of job and internship opportunities and apply your marketable knowledge, skills, and experience. You may also sign up for events and schedule your individual, customized career coaching appointments with an experienced career management professional by using the self-schedule “Career Appointment” feature in Handshake.

[MBA-Exchange.com Premium Services](#)- Specifically offered to Quinlan MBA and MS students who are currently enrolled in MBA-and/or MS-seeking programs and accessible through six months post-degree completion. Access local, national and international MBA- level jobs and internships and career information: Start in your first quarter and use your LUC.edu e-mail address to register for your account here: <https://www.mba-exchange.com/candidates/mba-candidates.php>.

[GoinGlobal](#) – Offers a variety of resources for those interested in gaining experience abroad. Research career guides that are city, state, and country specific; or take a look at lists of companies that have submitted H1B applications within the past 12 months in your area. You can also perform a targeted global internship or job search using several criteria.

[Loyola Mentors](#)- Access professional and alumni mentors through Quinlan’s mentoring platform.

[Firsthand](#) - Relevant and timely career resources to research industries, companies, professions, opportunities providing in-depth intelligence on industry, company, or professional roles. Login with your LUC user ID and password to access online content through Loyola University Libraries.

[Crain’s Chicago Business](#) – Login with your LUC user ID and password to access online content through Loyola University Libraries.

[Wall Street Journal](#) – The Wall Street Journal is the world’s leading business publication with coverage of the last 90 days and search abilities back 4 years. Login with your LUC user ID and password to access online content through Loyola University Libraries.

[O\\*NET Online](#) – Online tool for career exploration and job analysis.

## Key Components of a Cover Letter

A cover letter is your customized written introduction of yourself relevant to your job search interests (it may also be a digital email message) and it may be read before, and/or after, you and/or your resume has received a hiring professional's attention. The cover letter is concise and should complement the resume by specifically highlighting your qualifications and experience relevant to why you are a match for the specific position and company/opportunity.

Be particularly responsive to the job or internship description requirements.

Your cover letter may also be read and re-read before, during and after your interview(s) by a number of individuals involved in the selection and hiring process.

Also, you may type the key components of a cover letter, into an email message body and attach a resume PDF, as mentioned in the cover letter/email message.

Visit [here](#) for the Business Career Services cover letter guide.

### From the top:

**Your Heading:** This usually includes your first and last name (middle initial optional). Your street address, city, state and zip code serve as the mailing address included in all business letters. You may also format it similar to the heading on your resume.

**Full Date:** (Month, Date, Year) This is important as cover letters are not time stamped like email messages.

**Employer's heading:** This includes Employer's/Recruiter's name (if known\*)  
Employer's Title, Name of Company/Organization, Street Address, City, State, Zip Code

**Salutation:** Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. (Last name of contact):

or

Dear Hiring Manager/Recruiter (\*If the last name of the contact is unknown)

(Do not write: To Whom It May Concern)

**Paragraph 1:** Address your specific reason for writing to the individual/company as it relates to the employer's hiring or talent needs. Distinguish yourself in the first paragraph to give them some context:  
*As a Master of Science in Accountancy student with 2+ years of audit experience ...*

**Paragraph 2 and 3:** Describe how your skills, knowledge and experience and other attributes qualify you for the position and demonstrate that you are well-suited for the opportunity. Indicate confidence that you will excel in the role and be an asset to the organization/employer.

**Paragraph 4:** Show gratitude and mention follow-up or next steps in closing and ending the letter

### Signature:

Sincerely,

Full first and last name

Signature as appropriate

If resume is attached or enclosed: mention this.

## Sample Cover Letter

Mario A. Business  
1000 N. State Street  
Chicago, IL 60610

February 1, 2023

Ms. Samantha Hanson  
Data Analytics Manager  
XXX Firm, LLP  
122 N. State Street, #3000  
Chicago, IL 60603

Dear Ms. Hanson,

It was a pleasure to meet you at the recent Accounting Career Fair hosted at Loyola University Chicago Quinlan School of Business. I appreciated your insightful remarks about the growing opportunities in accounting and future career opportunities at your firm. I am also writing to express my strong interest in the Audit and Innovation Associate role. I am confident that my strong analytical and leadership skills will enable me to add value to your practice and clients.

Currently, I am pursuing a Master of Science in Accountancy at the Quinlan School of Business and expect to complete it in May of 2023. In addition to a 3.8 cumulative grade point average and my plan to take the CPA Exam in May 2023, I offer in-depth experience in General Ledger, Accounts Receivable and Payable, and have efficiently processed invoices, expense reports and payment transactions. I have applied a number of software tools including Intuit Proconnect Tax Online and Thomson Reuters Checkpoint. Also, I am fluent in English and Spanish, proficient in Microsoft Excel and am a well-rounded, client service-focused professional.

I also have a track record for taking initiative and demonstrating strong leadership skills as evidenced by my success in creating a new and growing Accounting organization while enhancing collaboration with business school professors and practitioners and researchers. I also pitched a new Tax Competition and created an inaugural and successful event that was attended by faculty and accounting professionals in the field.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of my qualifications. I have attached my resume and welcome the opportunity to talk with you further or schedule an in-person interview at your convenience.

Sincerely,  
Mario A. Business  
[Signature]

312-888-2322  
[mbusiness@luc.edu](mailto:mbusiness@luc.edu)

Enclosed: Resume

## Key Components of a Professional Resume

**Heading:** This usually includes first and last name (middle initial optional). Your street address is not usually needed; city and state is often sufficient. Include one phone number and one email address, as this is required. LinkedIn URL is optional though frequently listed.

**Professional Profile or Professional Summary:** This can vary in length (2-4 lines) and format, however, aim to make it concise and demonstrative of the overall value you offer as a professional. You may include your unique strengths, skills, year of industry experience in a way that distinguishes you and matches you to the position/role you are seeking.

**Core Competencies or Skills:** These can be listed in bullet-pointed columns (usually 6-9).

**Education:** This is listed in reverse chronological order, so the master's degree/university is listed before your bachelor's degree and institution. Always include location, city, state (country if it is international).

Example:

Loyola University Chicago, Quinlan School of Business	Chicago, IL
Master of Science in Accountancy	Expected Graduation Month, Year

- ✓ Include cumulative GPA if it is 3.5/4.0 or above
- ✓ List names of completed courses and/or courses in progress, though distinguish which they are

**Professional Experience:** Always include most relevant work and professional experience.

Example:

Name of the Organization	City, State, Country (if international)
Job Title	Start Month, Year – End Month, Year

- Include 3-6 bullet points that convey your challenges, achievements, and results
- Quantify and/or qualify results to offer specific, measurable and memorable accomplishments that convey the value to the organization

Follow this formula when writing bullet points: Action Verb + Task = Impact

- Reflect Challenge, Achievement, Result (CAR)
- Quantify and Qualify Results when appropriate

**Professional Affiliations/Associations:** It is encouraged to include.

Example:

American Institute of CPAs, Member AICPA	2016-Present
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**Leadership:** It is encouraged to include.

**Community Service/Volunteerism:** It is encouraged to include some experience.

**Awards and Recognition:** It is encouraged to include some examples.

## Resume Design

There is quite a bit of variability in resume design and format today, however, there are some basic guidelines shared by many recruiting and career professionals.

**Recommended fonts:** Arial, Georgia, Garamond, Helvetica, Calibri (10-12-point font size. Your name may be slightly larger than the rest of the content on the resume).

**Formatting and Readability:** Send as a PDF unless requested in another format. Name the document "Your Full Name\_Resume" or something similar.

One page is frequently considered appropriate for graduate students with 1-5 years of experience depending on your scope of experience and accomplishments. If the resume is more than 1 ½ pages, it may be better to condense it to one page, or assure that it is a compelling, full, two pages of content.

Ensure all spacing is correct and leverage white space. Use only text as opposed to symbols or text boxes. Avoid using first person pronouns like "I", and "we".

**Customization:** Create a basic resume which reflects all your experience and then customize it each time you apply to a new role, by being responsive to the job description and requirements. Be sure to match key competencies, qualification, skills, or company values listed in the job description to which you are applying.

**After you create an updated draft of your resume, login to [Handshake](#) to schedule a personalized resume review appointment. During your appointment you will receive strategic resume customization recommendations that will be based on your unique career goals from your Graduate Career Coach.**



**Mario A. Business**Chicago, IL | [mbusiness@luc.edu](mailto:mbusiness@luc.edu) | 312-888-2322 | LinkedIn URL

**PROFESSIONAL PROFILE:** Dynamic, results-oriented M.S. Accountancy student with in-depth knowledge in bookkeeping, audit and tax. Experienced with serving as team lead on projects and in an internship audit engagement. Recognized for accuracy, attention to detail and timeliness in individual and group projects. Resourceful team player with a strong desire to contribute problem-solving skills to a public accounting firm.

**CORE COMPETENCIES:**

General Ledger • Accounts Receivable & Payable Processes  
 Invoices • Expense Reports • Intuit Tax Online • GAAP Standards  
 Tax Returns & Worksheets • Auditing • Thomson Reuters • Checkpoint • Bilingual, English & Spanish  
 Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, Word

**EDUCATION:**

**Loyola University Chicago, Quinlan School of Business** Chicago, IL  
**Master of Science in Accountancy** Expected Month, Year  
 Cumulative GPA: 3.8/4.0  
 CPA Eligibility Expected Month Year  
 Completed courses include: Advanced CPA Topics, Concepts in Taxation, Managerial Accounting, Accounting Information Systems, Auditing and Internal Control Systems

**Rutgers University, Rutgers Business School** New Brunswick, NJ  
**Bachelor of Science in Finance** Month, Year

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

**Garntex International Corporation** Minneapolis, MN  
**Staff Accountant Intern** Start Month, Year-End Month, Year

- Reviewed and managed accounts payable, accounts receivable, and payroll to ensure accurate operations and was given positive performance review by CPA
- Performed bank reconciliation and assisted in generating budgets and forecasts on a quarterly basis
- Reported on variances in quarterly costing reports and monitored and recorded company expenses
- Assisted manager in generated budget proposals and monitoring projects that ensured accuracy

**Arming International Corporation** Chicago, IL  
**Business Associate** Start Month, Year-End Month, Year

- Assisted team of operational managers with planning and allocating resources for large scale projects
- Analyzed large data sets and reported on trends that impacted quarterly costing reports and monitored and divided expenditure variances
- Selected by manager to lead a new project management software review and trial that resulted in presentation to managers and recommendations for product purchase
- Generated budget proposals and monitoring projects that ensure accuracy

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS and LEADERSHIP:**

**AICPA**, Chicago Chapter Member 2018-Present  
**ALPFA**, Vice President 2018-Present

- Assisted with Regional Conference planning and execution, hosting over a dozen firm representatives

## Professional Organizations

**Connect with the Loyola Business Leadership HUB resources, programs, events, and networks for continuous learning and professional development**

[Loyola Business Leadership Hub](#) – The Loyola Business Leadership Hub draws on the expertise of Loyola students, faculty, staff, and global connections to help organizations succeed. The Loyola Business Leadership Hub has broad business knowledge and insights with [Centers: Loyola Business Leadership Hub: Loyola University Chicago \(luc.edu\)](#)

**Connect with national associations and resources; conferences, programs, events, networks, and webinars for continuous learning and professional development**

[Accounting Newsletter Online](#)

[American Bar Association – Section of Taxation](#)

[American Institute of CPAs](#)

[Association of Certified Fraud Examiners](#)

[Association of Chartered Certified Accountants](#)

[Financial Accounting Standards Board](#)

[Financial Executives International](#)

[Government Accounting Standards Board](#)

[Illinois CPA Society  
Institute of Internal Auditors Internal Revenue Service](#)

[Institute of Management Accountants](#)

[International Federation of Accountants](#)

**Connect with Professional Multicultural National Associations and Resources**

[Ascend Pan-Asian Leaders](#)  
[National Black MBA Association](#)  
[Prospanica](#)  
[MBA Veterans](#)  
[Jesuit MBA Network](#)  
[Jesuit Career Consortium for Students](#)

## Interview Preparation

- [How to Ace the 50 Most Common Interview Questions](#)
- [Preparing for a Skype Interview](#)
- [5-Minute Interview Review](#)

## Relevant Job Titles & Skills

- Audit Associate
- Senior Associate
- Manager
- Senior Manager
- Tax Associate
- Partner
- Managing Partner