



There is often confusion about what constitutes an academic reference letter.

A **STRONG** academic reference letter is written by someone who has personal experience with you and can speak to your **ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS**.

It is not necessarily written by someone **IN ACADEMIA**.

Example:

Your boss at the local coffee shop has worked with you for over 2 years and can verify that you are punctual, on time, and kind to both customers and fellow workers. Your boss can provide you with a valuable reference letter, but it is **NOT** an academic reference letter.

Your professor has graded your work but there are 100 students in the class and your professor can say little about you personally, that does not already appear in your transcript. Your professor can provide you with a **WEAK** academic reference letter.

You had a co-op job for a reputable company where you developed, stuffed and tested PCBs. Your boss can provide you with a **STRONG** academic reference letter.

You volunteered for a charity where you developed a software tool to assist with the organization. Your primary contact can provide you with a **STRONG** academic reference letter.

Risks:

- If your academic reference letters are deemed to be unreliable, they may be disregarded and you will have effectively provided no academic reference letters.
- Your competition may have provided strong academic reference letters.

- Leo Stocco