Top ten covering letter tips:

1. Try not to make it any longer than one page of A4.
2. Plain white paper is fine. It's OK to print your letter on expensive cream or pale blue paper, but content and layout are far more important! Use the same colour for your CV.
3. If you are sending via email, put your covering letter in the body of the email and add your CV as an attachment. If you attach it with nothing in the email body it may be misidentified as spam.
4. Don't make the employer work to read your letter! Keep it clear, concise and to the point.
5. Use your own words, not clichés. Action verbs can help to make it sound better.
6. Spell-check and then double-check your spelling and grammar.
7. Make the person who reads it feel special: address it to them personally, and tailor it to the job you are applying for. If you are not sure who to address it to, search LinkedIn for Managers of the Department you are applying to, or the name of a Human Resources staff member.
8. Research the company thoroughly, and familiarise yourself with their market, products and competitors. Include your understanding of the work/knowledge of the company, and how you fit the criteria required. Say why you decided to pursue this career, what first brought it to your attention, why you as a History student should be interested in a career in finance.
9. Relate your skills to the job, and refer back to the job description, ensuring that you show the employer that you have obtained the communicating, teamworking, problem solving and leadership or other skills that are appropriate for the job.
10. Say when you're available to start work (and end, if it's a placement): be as flexible as possible.