

Writing Your Personal Statement

Your personal statement is **your** opportunity to put **your** personal touch to **your** application. It should give the admissions tutor an insight into what kind of a person you are, what you will bring to the course/university and what you hope to gain from the course and life at university.

It needs to be original and your own work.

Aim for your statement to be **80% academic**;

I want to study;

I have read/ watched/ visited; (if possible talk about things outside the syllabus as well as within it)

It was interesting because; what I learnt from this was; what was challenging was

If you are doing an EPQ then write about that; what your EPQ is on; reasons behind doing that topic

and **20% extra-curricular /enrichment**

In my spare time I play; I had some work experience at; I enjoy/

Remember – this is **ONE** application for **ALL** your University choices.

- If applying for multiple slightly different courses, think of common themes
- It is really important to pay care and attention to detail – both for content and grammar
- Avoid quotations – use your own words
- Remember that there will be plagiarism checks
- A personal statement must reflect the person who wrote it and detail your achievements so far, your interests and the reasons for your choice of course and career.
- Make your statement structured, positive and easy to follow. There is not much space on the form so you need to be clear and succinct and it will take several drafts to do this.
- Show how your interest in your subject has developed and what are your ultimate goals
- Be enthusiastic about your chosen course and show how you have researched the area – books read, taster sessions, trips, related hobbies
- Explain why the courses you have chosen are the best options for you
- Mention any job, placement, work or voluntary experience you have and what you gained from it. In particular mention relevant experience, skills, motivation, insight and knowledge
- Include details of the key/core skills you have as well as other achievements like Duke of Edinburgh Awards
- Indicate those areas of school life that you find particularly interesting
- Mention the qualities you can bring to the course and to the university or college
- Outline your social, sports or leisure interests
- Include details of out-of-school activities. These can show your interests, maturity, self-reliance, ability to get on with others and to take responsibility
- Evidence of skills from enrichment e.g. teamwork from Challenge of Management, prefect leadership, master classes, etc.
- Wherever possible use real examples of how your personal qualities have come to the fore
- If you have applied for sponsorship mention it here
- If you are planning a year out, explain how this will benefit you and your future studies
- Be truthful. You are likely to be asked about your personal statement at interview
- Make sure it is easy to read and there are no grammar, punctuation or spelling mistakes
- Remember to write a conclusion

Key Points

- Personal statements are important and must be your own work
- There is no standard format – they need to reflect the writer
- A good personal statement is a result of thorough research and practice

The personal statement is used by admissions tutors to select between applicants and provides them with information to guide an interview. Most admissions tutors take the UCAS form and:

- Read the qualifications to be taken and predicted grades
- Look at the GCSE and AS results
- Read the reference
- Read the personal statement
- Evidence of love of subject and the broader person

Admissions tutors will be looking for:

- Level of motivation and interest in the course – you must write your reasons for your choice of course
- Confirmation that the student has met or exceeded the academic requirements and will cope with the course
- Evidence of the skills required to succeed
- Consistency between the personal statement and the reference
- Will the student be interesting to teach, will they make a contribution to the department
- Prompts for interview questions
- For vocational programmes e.g. physiotherapy and medicine, they will want to see evidence of what was learnt through work experience in terms of skills and an awareness of the nature of the work

When planning your personal statement think about:

- Why you have chosen the course
- Why you have enjoyed studying and want to continue with it
- Your achievements and what you have learnt from them
- Your skills and interests which are relevant to the course
- Avoid lists – you need to write more about what you have got out of various experiences
- If you are planning a gap year you must explain what you are planning, why and how you think you will gain from the experience
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Once you have written a rough draft ask yourself:

- Is it truthful?
- Do I sound an interesting person to teach?
- Would you offer yourself a place?

Remember a good personal statement results from lots of research:

- Prospectuses
- UCAS entry profiles – from the website
- University websites
- Various publications – see Mrs Davey, the Sixth Form Team or your tutor for advice
- Open days – when you go find out what they want to see on the personal statement

Each statement is thoroughly checked for plagiarism so be original.

Quick Check Notes

- **Fee Code: 02UK or Student Finance England**
- **Education: month/year should be consistent i.e. 06/2016 or 08/2016 not combination of both**
- **A2 and AS should be shown separately**
- **If an award has been certificated it must be shown on application – even if fail!**
- **Personal statement eg: Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze Award**
- **Lower case all subjects except Language. Don't add unnecessary caps**
- **If not sure about apostrophes – ASK!**
- **Write out in full isn't (is not), didn't (did not) etc**
- **Don't use numbers, type the word in full**