

My Personal Statement



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Schools and Colleges Liaison Service

What is a Personal Statement and why is it important?

Your Personal Statement forms part of your UCAS application and will be read by an Admissions Tutor, an academic who teaches on the course(s) you have applied for. It will be used to help the Admissions Tutor decide if you are the right candidate for their course – so it's really important that you get it right.



What should I include in my Personal Statement?



Reasons for choosing the course

You should explain your reasons for choosing the course. What is your motivation? Why does this subject interest you? How long have you wanted to study it? Is the subject linked to your existing programmes of study?

Suitability and understanding of the course

Describe what you know about the course. This is especially important for new or professional subjects. What exposure have you had to the subject? What research and wider reading have you undertaken? Have you experienced the course or career area through Taster Days or work experience?

Career aspirations linked to course

You only need include this if it is linked to your chosen course, for example if you are applying for a professional subject such as nursing or teaching. Try to justify and give reasons for your career aspirations and refer to your personal skills and qualities, work experience or personal experience.

Employment and work experience

Including this is particularly important for professional courses. You should outline your work experience in order to demonstrate your commitment to and understanding of your chosen course and career. Can you demonstrate a realistic insight into the profession? Outline the duration of your work experience, the tasks undertaken and the skills and understanding you gained.

Higher Education relevant skills and abilities

Include your Higher Education relevant skills and abilities. Try to focus on two or three key skills, rather than a long list, and give examples to back this up. Relevant skills might include time management, independent study, research and leadership/team working skills.

Extra-curricular achievements

To make yourself stand out from other applicants, provide examples of your extra-curricular achievements. For example, you might include a first aid certificate, Duke of Edinburgh Award, National Citizen Service (NCS), prefect duties, school council, sporting achievements or charity work. Make sure you highlight what you have gained from these experiences.



Other interests

Consider anything else that makes you interesting that you have not yet included.

For example, hobbies such as being in a band, playing sport, or visiting museums. 'Socialising with friends' does not set you apart from others so there's no need to mention it.



My Personal Statement Framework

Reasons for choosing the course...

Employment and
work experience...



Higher Education relevant
skills and abilities...



My opening sentence/paragraph...

Suitability and understanding
of the course...

Career aspirations
linked to the course...



Extra-curricular
achievements...

Other interests...



A large, empty rectangular box with a light orange background and a dark orange border, intended for additional text or a summary.



Personal Statement Format



How your statement is written is just as important as the content.

Written Style

Aim for formal, professional and positive language and avoid slang. Pay particular attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Structure

Consider the order of importance of the information. Your reason for choosing the course is more important than your hobbies. Construct your statement using appropriate paragraphs and include an introduction and conclusion.

Length

Maximum 4,000 characters or 47 lines, including spaces. Try to be concise and precise and avoid repetition.

Do



Demonstrate positivity and enthusiasm

Make sure you portray yourself in the most positive light possible. Demonstrate your enthusiasm through the use of positive language.



Provide evidence and examples

Provide examples to back up what you write about yourself. For example, if you highlight a skill you have, you need to explain how and when you developed that skill.



Allow lots of time

Allow yourself plenty of time to write your statement. If possible, begin the process in Year 12 as you will need to plan, draft, check and edit before you refine your final version and submit.



Ask for feedback

It is useful to share your statement with tutors and parents as they can be more objective. You will need to act on feedback to edit and redraft your statement.



Don't



Exaggerate

Don't exaggerate or lie about your achievements to make your statement better. You are likely to get caught out.



Copy

Read other statements as examples and learn from them, but do not copy them as UCAS operates a similarity detection service. Make your statement individual and unique to you.



Rely on spell-checker

Spell-checker won't pick up all mistakes so proof read as many times as possible and get others to check it too.



Leave it until the last minute

If your statement is rushed, Admissions Tutors will know and you are jeopardising your chances of getting the place you want.





Where to find out more about Personal Statements

Your go-to guide on everything you need to know about personal statements:

ucas.com/personalstatement

A guide to writing personal statements with subject specific examples:

hud.ac/studential-personal-statements



How to apply

A guide to completing your UCAS application form online:

ucas.com/fillinginyourapplication

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Tel: 01484 472282

Web: hud.ac.uk



Gold

