



**Writing your  
Personal Statement**



# Writing your personal statement

## What is a personal statement?

Your personal statement is the most important part of your application to university. It explains who you are, why you think you are a good applicant and why you want to study

the course you have chosen. It is about 400 words/47 lines and needs to be submitted along with the rest of your UCAS application.

## Why does a personal statement matter?

It allows you to stand out from other applicants with the same grades. Competition for university is tough; your grades alone

will not get you a place. Think of it like a job application – you need to impress.

## DO...

- **Structure!** Even if you make good points, a poorly organised personal statement makes reading hard work.
- **Show awareness of your subject.** Make sure your passion shines through.
- **Grab the reader's attention.** You can use quotes, a zippy first line, or tell a story.
- **Make it relevant and current.**
- **Give examples** to back up your points: don't just say "I'm a good team player" without any evidence. How does your reader know this is true? Instead, try something like this: "I've developed excellent time management skills through juggling my studies with a part-time job and babysitting my sisters twice a week. Balancing these obligations while still leaving time for hobbies is hard, but I make weekly plans which enable me to organise myself well."
- **Use all the space** – just writing a few lines isn't enough.

## DON'T...

- **Lie.** You will be caught out.
- **Use slang or poor English.** This is a formal document.
- **Use bullet points.** Write in full paragraphs.
- **Get someone else to write it** – that includes personal statements found online. Admissions tutors have software which will tell them if something is stolen.
- **Try to include too much.** It is better to mention a few skills with examples to show how you developed them.
- **Repeat information** that is elsewhere on your application.
- **Mention specific universities.** The same personal statement goes to all your choices.

## Suggested structure for your personal statement

You can structure your personal statement any way you want; for instance, you might have so much great work experience you want to talk about that you decide not to say very much about your experience at school or college. That's fine. However, you must make sure that you explain why you have chosen your course

and about the skills you have which you think make you a good candidate for university.

Over the next six pages you will find a suggested structure, including prompt questions. You don't have to answer every question in your paragraph – they are just there to help you.

















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