

TOP TIPS FOR WRITING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT



HOW TO APPLY...THE UCAS FORM

FOUR SECTIONS:



Personal details
and Choices



Qualifications



Reference

Predicted grades

Academic &
character references

Any mitigating
circumstances



Personal
Statement

PERSONAL STATEMENT

- The personal statement is your opportunity to show universities **you** would be a great student
- You can write up to **4000 characters** of text (including spaces), or **47 lines**
- This is a 'hard' word limit- you will not be able to exceed it!

Why are you applying?
Your ambitions and interests
about the subject and course.

What makes you suitable?
Any relevant skills, experiences
and achievements.

OUR TOP TIPS – MAKE IT REAL

- You have one personal statement, even if you are applying for multiple subjects or joint honours
- Start as soon as you can
- Start with a plan, not an essay
- It will take a few drafts
- Don't worry too much about that opening sentence
- Think about how you work best: scribble on paper or typing
- Save different versions each time



OUR TOP TIPS - HOW TO STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

Start off by explaining what subject you are applying for and why

ACADEMIC INTERESTS

Talk in depth about what you enjoy about your chosen subject and why you want to take it further

'SUPER-CURRICULAR' ACTIVITIES

Anything related to your course that you have done outside of school or college will massively boost your application

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

This section will give the Admissions Officer a little more information about your personality and what you can contribute to university life

CONCLUSION

Finish with a strong conclusion, summing up why you want to study your chosen subject at university

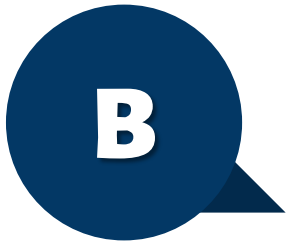
70%

30%

MAKING A POINT



Activity



Benefit



Course/ Career

ACADEMIC INTERESTS

Which course(s) do you want to study?

Why do you want to take it on to university level?

- What do you particularly enjoy about your subject?
- What have you learnt from your current studies that you would like to take further?
- Have you done any particular academic projects within your studies? An extended essay or a research project?
- What personal qualities do you possess that make you suited to this area of study?
- Is your interest sparked by particular career ambitions?



MAKING A POINT

A

Studied Health & Social Care A-level

B

Developed confidence and communication skills

C

Helpful for participating in seminars and presentations

SUPER-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Anything you have done outside of school that is directly relevant to your course.

These kind of activities will show your dedication to studying at degree level and demonstrate a wider interest in your subject area. Examples might include:

- Work experience
- Volunteering
- Extended Project
- Trips/Visits
- Own work

Make the most of these activities - say what you have gained from them and why they made have made you want to study a course in that area.



SUPER-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A

Took an online evening course in Health & Social Care

B

Improved subject knowledge and experience participating in lectures

C

Able to engage with university teaching and course content

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Any other activity undertaken which is not directly relevant to the course, but still develops skills and personal qualities

These kind of activities will show your character and demonstrate other transferable skills they may have. Examples might include:

- Sports activity
- Work experience
- Community work
- Music skills
- Positions of responsibility (e.g. prefect)

Make the most of these activities - state what you have gained from them and how those skills might relate to university study.



EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



Member of the netball team



Learned personal discipline and team work



Able to manage university life and collaborate with others

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS



GAP YEAR STUDENTS

- For a student planning to take a gap year, you can still apply beforehand for deferred entry
- In this case it can be helpful to mention your plans in the personal statement
- You should indicate what skills or personal development you are hoping to gain from the gap year



REVIEW: PERSONAL STATEMENT 1

PERSONAL STATEMENT ONE

Ever since I was a child I would create wild, creative and fascinating drawings of my dream home; a home which would spell comfort and luxury. A reality? Most probably not. However, that will and desire to create a building which is architecturally beautiful, has continued to run through my veins. I have without a doubt been influenced by programmes such as Grand Designs on Channel 4 or Mega-structures on Channel 5. One has taught me how delicate yet strong a structure can be, whilst the other has shown me that in this world there is a continuous desire to go one step further into the impossible. The Millau Viaduct, created by Sir Norman Foster, is a structure which continues to fascinate me, for these very same reasons. My fascination for architecture has thus driven my desire to become an architect. I often find myself enticed by Architectural Review, a journal which reveals the latest news and headlines in the architectural world. One article which sets itself out from the rest was one about South Africa and the issues surrounding poverty and prejudice among the black community. Although South Africa has emerged from the shadow of apartheid, still a huge number of people live in poverty in townships. The article reviewed how architects have set about improving the lives of those who live in the townships. One construction was that of the Usasazo School in the Khayelitsha Township. This is already delivering improvements to the education system the route to a better future for many. Another construction is the Police Station which covers the cape Peninsula's local rail network has set about reducing the crime rates, which are considerably high in South Africa with around 20 murders per 1000 people. These two examples have shown me that architecture can not only improve the environment which we live in but also society as well.

Having this desire to study architecture at university, has led me to take work experience opportunities at architectural firms. During the summer term of 2009 I was accepted for a week's work experience at Rogers Stirk Harbour & Partners in London, where I was invited to create a small sanctuary for architects who worked late into the night, somewhere where they could relax, unwind and sleep. That week was without a doubt one of the most interesting and fascinating experiences I have had, not only because of an intriguing and enjoyable topic, but also the kindness and helpfulness of everyone who I worked with. I have also worked in the retailing business for a week, at a golf shop, and I have had experience working in a charity shop (once a week for a year). These have also been experiences that I will never forget.

I have played for the highest teams in rugby and football and I also enjoy more individual sports such as squash, skiing, and scuba diving (reaching the level of Dive Leader in the BSAC branch), and am the secretary of the Scuba club. I also enjoy playing music. In the past I've played the Bassoon to grade 4, and I still play the Alto and Baritone Saxophone. I hope to complete grade 8 at the end of the year. Because of my love for the Saxophone, I have thrown myself into a various groups such as the School wind band, swing band, and the schools saxophone quartet. I have also enjoyed playing music outside the school at my church. I also enjoy art and frequently attend Life Drawing sessions to try and improve my drawing skills. It is because of these skills that I have been appointed head of house music and art. I have also taken part in school plays, and have achieved my Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award.

My childhood ambition of building my luxurious home will never completely leave me, but as I have matured I have realised that the creation of affordable homes of every description for people in all parts of the world, made with sustainable resources, is infinitely more important. I wish to study Architecture so as to be able to part of the future of the world's buildings.



10 MINUTES

Look for:

- Correct grammar and punctuation
- Relevant content
- Skills
- Links to the course
- Relevant experience
- Good structure
- Positive comments

Personal Statement One

Architecture

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Names of TV shows
– not academic

Additional reading taking
up a large percentage of
the word count

Uses “I” a lot

Grammar incorrect

Complicated and
unclear conclusion,
phrasing should be
simpler

Long Introduction

Doesn't list any of the
skills and benefits of
these experiences

Unnecessary
information

Extra –curricular
slightly too detailed

REVIEW: PERSONAL STATEMENT 2

PERSONAL STATEMENT TWO

Computing can at times be very maddening but when I solve a problem the feeling of satisfaction reinforces my desire to build upon my knowledge of this intriguing subject. It's an exciting time to be studying computing in our rapidly increasing technological world and I'm keen to take a role. I am studying C and Java while for my year 13 project I am enjoying analysing a company's situation, identifying the solution and writing a program. Furthermore the units on arrays and data representation have held a particular interest. Each lesson has given me fresh ideas to contemplate, developing my scientific knowledge, while testing my problem-solving abilities. I am looking forward to learning much more about programming, databases and operating systems. Mathematics has been an absorbing choice of A level and my logical mind has found the modules on algebra, statistics and integration particularly appealing. I think I would enjoy studying topics on calculus and probability.

Computers touch almost every aspect of our daily lives and are invaluable in mathematical research, while mathematics forms the basis of our understanding of science and technology. I was very pleased when I realised I could study a degree that allowed me develop both my passions.

In Psychology A level I especially liked the modules on memory and have conducted research in these areas. I am a member of the British Psychological Society. Creativity is important in the study of all these subjects and I hope I can apply the skills learnt to my degree course.

At weekends and during school holidays I work in a thriving public library which has a comprehensive range of IT facilities. My interpersonal and communication skills have been greatly developed while working there. Working with other members of staff has helped me understand the meaning of team work and flexibility. I have found helping the public with a varied range of enquiries challenging and stimulating. Work experience at an estate agent first helped me learn the value of how to organise and manage my time efficiently, and the ability to work independently when required.

In the sixth form I am the student representative for the School council. My main role is organising extra-curricular activities. I am proud that I have been awarded numerous Head Teacher commendations, certificates for attendance and just recently my form award for outstanding effort and achievement. Community Service in the sixth form gives me the opportunity to work with a Year 7 mathematics class which I have found very rewarding. Furthermore I am involved in a buddy system assisting newcomers to the school. For many years I have been a member of local sports clubs and have experienced many sporting activities including gymnastics, tennis and swimming. Badminton is important to me and my involvement with a junior badminton team taught me the values of patience, leadership and delegation. I am interested in family history and have enjoyed the methodical research this past time requires. My musical abilities focus on my electronic keyboard.

My career path is yet unplanned but I know that I have a desire to be further challenged. I am dedicated to my A level studies so I can take a degree course that I know will be stimulating. I know that university life is full of possibilities with the opportunity to try fresh activities, meet different people and the chance to be involved with another community. It's an exciting time and I'm enthusiastic about my future.



10 MINUTES

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- Correct grammar and punctuation
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- Good structure
- Positive comments

Personal Statement Two

Computer Science

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This information is already available from the UCAS form.

Shows development of key skills but could be improved by mentioning how this would be useful to the degree.

Good start to the conclusion. It is okay to not have everything planned out.

"I" used 28 times in total.

Shorter paragraphs give a fragmented structure and doesn't always flow.

REVIEW: PERSONAL STATEMENT 3

PERSONAL STATEMENT THREE

A beautiful smile is infectious. A smile of one who suffers from periodontitis may be infectious for different reasons. My keen interest in dentistry stems from an early age. I believe I possess the necessary skills and attributes for such a career; I am a diligent and motivated individual who is fascinated by the ever-expanding field of dentistry. Having always been meticulous, it is my attention to detail and precision in my work that makes me such a fitting candidate for the vocation of dentistry.

My desire to pursue dentistry was confirmed when I spent time at two different dental practices, one in the NHS and the other private. During my placement at the private clinic, I learnt a great deal, including dental vocabulary, how to conduct a thorough check-up and also the principles of more complex procedures. I was fortunate enough to be allowed to use the facilities to perform fillings myself, on old dentures, and was praised for the competency I displayed. Spending a morning at the labs, I observed how bridges, crowns and other fittings are produced. I was intrigued by the innovative dental materials and instruments used, and how the technology continues to advance. Time at my NHS placement highlighted to me the considerable differences between the two practices in terms of workload and expectations, allowing me to appreciate the varying demands of the profession. I will also be undertaking a placement shadowing an orthodontist at a local NHS hospital to further my experience.

Additionally, I have completed placements both at a care home for the elderly and disabled, and a primary school where I was involved with the reception class. These helped me improve my interpersonal skills, learning to evaluate and adapt when dealing with people of different ages and abilities. I gained a better insight into palliative care and the importance of patience in a healthcare profession. Having the responsibility of other peoples' safety taught me to be circumspect at all times. All these qualities will aid me in my chosen career.

Working on the pharmacy team at Boots the Chemist, I have enjoyed customer interactions, where being attentive and empathetic is essential in providing excellent customer care. I am currently training on a Healthcare Advisors Course to broaden my understanding of the medicines I sell.

My A-level choices of Biology, Chemistry and Physics reflect my avid interest in the sciences. Product Design has helped me build on manual dexterity, precision and accuracy – abilities I know are fundamental for such a profession as dentistry.

Throughout my school life I have participated in a number of activities and taken on roles of responsibility. For two years I have been a school prefect, where responsibilities include organising events and acting as an ambassador for the school. In Year 9 I was a School Council representative, and I am currently an active member of the Sixth Form Working Party. Holding such positions has developed my communication skills and sense of diplomacy. Moreover, I am a mentor for a Year 10 form, providing counsel and guidance. I was awarded Student of the Year 2009 for my efforts and dedication in the Dorset Enterprise and Skills Challenge – an exciting contest in which we formed a company and competed against others. Teamwork and cooperation were vital, along with organisation and the ability to work under pressure to meet deadlines. My role as backstage crew director for my participating team in "Rock Challenge," a global dance competition, enabled me to establish strong leadership skills.

Outside of school, my hobbies lie in the arts: I hold LAMDA certificates up to grade 5 in drama; I have played the guitar for six years and have recently taken up piano; I am creative and enjoy designing. I believe I have the qualities, skills and attitude necessary to succeed. I am adamant that dentistry is the career I wish to pursue.



10 MINUTES

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Personal Statement Three

Dentistry

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Creative introduction

Links interest and super curricular activities well and shows experience in the subject.

Information is already included on the UCAS form.

Weak concluding statement compared to the beginning.

Incorrect grammar "one in the NHS..."

Could add further details as to what particular aspects of the chosen career these skills will be useful for.

Good range of examples to demonstrate positions of responsibility.

OUR TOP TIPS: WHAT TO DO

Show **enthusiasm**
and **wider experience**
of the subject

Keep the tone **formal** and
official- no abbreviations
(e.g. gotta, weren't)

Vary sentence structure and
openings

Encourage a **coherent,**
consistent structure

Back up points with relevant,
real life examples

Focus on **skills** and **qualities,**
not narrative

OUR TOP TIPS: WHAT NOT TO DO

DO NOT
Mention a specific
university

DO NOT
Use **negative** comments
about yourself or your
abilities

DO NOT
Use cliches, long quotes or
lists

DO NOT
Try to be funny

DO NOT
Use **irrelevant**
comments, facts or
exposition

DO NOT
Lie, plagiarise
or exaggerate

CONCLUSION

Allow plenty of **time** for writing

Pay attention to **structure** and **content**

Focus on your **skills** and **qualities**, not narrative

Consider **hobbies** and **interests**, no matter how unimportant you might think they are

Check thoroughly and ask others for help with this

Don't overthink it – the personal statement is just one part of the application



QUESTIONS

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Canterbury

Saturday 2 July 2022

Medway

Saturday 25 June 2022

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IF YOU THINK OF ANY OTHER QUESTIONS




Anietie Ette
Recruitment Officer
Kent Recruitment Team

[Chat with Anietie Ette](#)

ROLE DESCRIPTION
I'm here to help answer your queries related to applications, scholars...

[Read more about Anietie Ette ...](#)




Jonathan Stebbing
Recruitment Officer
Kent Recruitment Team

[Chat with Jonathan Stebbing](#)

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