

Personal Statement Pack

What is a personal statement?

Your personal statement is the most important part of your application to university. Its purpose is to explain **who** you are, **why** you think you are a good applicant for university 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.

DOs for your personal statement

- Structure! Even if you make good points, a rambling and poorly organised personal statement will make reading it 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 e.g. don't just say "I'm a good team player". Without any examples/evidence how does someone reading your personal statement know this is true? Instead try something like this: "I have developed excellent time management skills through juggling my studies with my part time job at Smith's Delicatessen and also babysitting my sisters twice a week. Balancing these obligations while still leaving time for hobbies has not been easy, but I draw up weekly plans which enable me to organise myself well."
- Use all the space – just writing a few lines isn't enough.

DON'Ts for your personal statement

- 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 than to just list loads.
- Repeat information that is elsewhere on your application.
- Mention specific universities – the same personal statement goes to all your choices.

