

Getting started on personal statement

Some ideas and templates to be used alongside the “How to write your personal statement” powerpoint and websites such as studential.com

Getting started – a possible framework for your personal statement

Introduction

You need to provide a brief but convincing explanation as to why you want to study your subject at university.

Be honest, talk about why you are interested in the subject (study at A level/recent field trip/museum trip). Why is this subject important and inspiring to you? What is it that motivated you personally to study this discipline?

What is it that you like about the course at degree level? Focus on specific areas of interest within your chosen subject – pick out a particular part of the subject and say how it motivates you .

Discuss any reasons why you think this subject is significant to society, perhaps by relating it to current affairs.

Be specific – don't just say you love English or Maths, say why, and try to avoid saying 'I always wanted to study...'

You could indicate what your longer term careers objectives are, if you have any. Even if they are broad, it can be a way of justifying your choice of course.

Your interest in the subject

Devote one paragraph to each subject you have studied at A level.

Describe how any of your A-Levels have given you the opportunity to study the subject in some detail. Which aspects did you enjoy and why? How do they relate to the course you want to embark on?

Think about the skills you have learned in your current studies that will be useful for your degree, such as essay writing , critical analysis, research or logic. Write down everything you can think of as it can be easily edited later.

Getting started – a possible framework for your personal statement

What you have been doing outside of the classroom.

Write down any extra-curricular activities you have undertaken that have helped you to develop a greater understanding of your chosen degree subject, giving brief details of any trips, books, documentaries or experiences you found inspiring **and why**. Why does this activity make you more suited to the course? **Again, be specific**. If you've undertaken any work experience related to the course then write it down here, **along with the skills you have developed by completing it**.

Remember, you need to show that you're the kind of person that can motivate yourself to do things outside of the classroom or lecture theatre. You need to be honest about the things you have done, especially if you are likely to be interviewed!

Use the template following these notes to think about these activities.

These first two parts should make up at least half but ideally two thirds of your personal statement.

Wider Skills and Personal Qualities

Move on to tell them a bit about yourself but make sure that it is honed to your application. Write about your main strengths, skills and qualities. Tell them what

your interests and non-academic achievements are. Mention sports/music/drama/positions of responsibility (over the last 2-3 years), give examples. Mention your part time job, or any other unusual travelling you've done (not Ibiza), charity work or unusual achievements or ambitions. **You are trying to give the admissions tutor a glimpse of the kind of person you are and most importantly what skills you've developed through those interests.**

Gap Year (if applicable)

If you are taking a gap year and applying for deferred entry then you must explain what you plan to do – give details! This shows the admissions tutor that you are organised and want to pursue interests outside of your studies. If you can relate it to the course then even better.

Getting started – a possible framework for your personal statement

Summary

Finish the personal statement with a one or two line summary of why you want to go to university and study the course and why ***you*** deserve to be offered a place.



Remember you are all different, and you all have something to offer.

Personal Statement template to help you get started

Introduction

What was my personal trigger that got me interested in the subject?
How does my subject relate to society or current affairs?
Which aspect am I really looking forward to studying in more detail? Why?

My interest in the subject – academic studies

	A-Level One	A-Level Two	A-Level Three	A-Level Four
Skill 1				
Skill 2				

Personal Statement template to help you get started

My interest in the subject – extra-curricular activities

Activity	Tick	Description	Why has it made you more suitable?
Outside reading		e.g. Reading the Economist regularly	Understanding of economic aspects & keeping up-to-date with current affairs
Outside reading			
Theatre trips			
Exhibitions			
School clubs			
Clubs outside of school			
Voluntary work			
Museum trips			
Historical sites			
Trips abroad			
Community work/activities			
Articles			
Hobbies			
Work experience			
Competitions/ prizes/ awards			
Published work			
Workshops			
Taster courses			
Other 1			
Other 2			
Other 3			
Other 4			

Personal Statement template to help you get started

Gap Years

Plans for my gap year:
How will I find them?
What am I hoping to achieve?
How will this help me with either my degree or university life?

Summary

Why do I want to go to university and study this course, and why do I deserve to be offered a place?
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Personal Statement – your first draft

Look back at the tables you've filled in and choose which are the most important things to include, and start turning notes into well-written prose.

Examples of positive phrases and keywords that can help you link sentences together, and combine your experiences with skills include:

Furthermore... ↓ ↑↑ [↓√] ↓ [√↑, , ⊕]
 ⊎ ↓ √] ↓ √ ⊕ ↑ ⊕ ↓ Thrive under pressure
 Strengthen) ↑ [⊕ ↓ √] ↓ √ ⊕ ↓ ⊕ ↓ ⊎ ⊕ ⊎) ↑ ↓ ,
 Skills I have gained The opportunity
 Participated in ⊎ √ " ↓ [[√ ↑ ⊎ √ [↓ ↑ ⊕ ⊕ √ ↓ ⊕]
 Reinforced] √ ↑ √ ↓ ⊕ ⊕ ↓ ⊕ ↓ √] ↓
 Moreover Commitment Using my initiative
) ↓ ↓ ↓ ⊕ [↓ **Hard work** Responsibility
 My pursuits Broadening my interest **I aspire to**
 My passion for √ ' ⊕ ↓ √ ⊕ √ ' ↓ ↓ [

Combining... with... has taught me Through attending

Start putting your sentences together, section by section, crossing them off as you go along to avoid repetition. Try and think of phrases of your own too for originality. Check the number of words to see if it fits, but don't worry if not because we will proof and re-draft, and proof and re-draft until it is just right...

I was determined to...

Personal Statement – your first draft

Introduction
Your interest in the subject (academic)
Your interest in the subject (extra-curricular)
Wider skills
Summary