



UNIVERSITY
OF HULL

Writing a Personal Statement

What is a personal statement?

- 47 lines or 4,000 characters written by you
- Part of your application to University through UCAS
- Opportunity to explain your skills and experiences
- Similar to a job application



Why is a personal statement important?

“ Personal statements are used to help make a number of **admissions decisions**: including whether to invite an applicant to an **interview**, make an **offer**, accept an applicant who’s **narrowly missed the conditions** of their offer...Investing time into making sure your personal statement is as strong as it can be is time well spent. ”

Richard Emborg - Director of Student Recruitment & Admissions, Durham University



When should you start writing your **personal statement?**

- As soon as possible!
- Allow enough time to redraft
- Ask other people to proof read for you



What makes an effective personal statement?

What are admissions tutors looking for?

“Your personal statement should show your uniqueness and aptitude for the course you’re applying for.

We want to see evidence of those transferrable skills, and how you can use them at university. If you’re captain of the rugby team, explain the ‘why’ and ‘how’ that has led you to develop leadership characteristics.”

- Sean Frost, Biomedical Science, University of Hull





What to include?

1. Why you want to study the subject
2. What skills and experiences do you have that make you suitable to study the subject
3. What makes you an interesting and unique individual

Suggested Structure

Opening Paragraph

2 or 3 sentences about what you want to study and why

Main Paragraphs

- What you are studying at the moment/have studied previously that is related to course
- Any work experience that you have that is particularly relevant
- Aspects of the course you find particularly interesting
- Skills and achievements
- Hobbies and interests

Conclusion

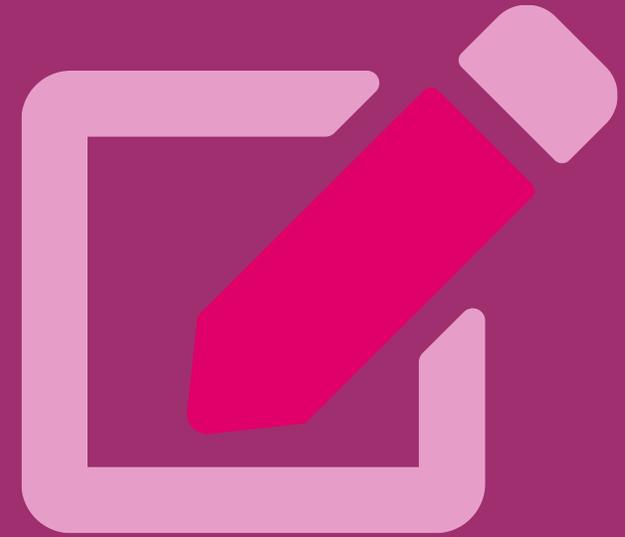
1 or 2 sentences to sum up why you'd be successful on the course



Opening Paragraph

- Go straight in
- State course title you are applying for
- Brief explanation of why you want to study the course (career aims, current study, ongoing interest etc)

Top Tip: Don't spend a long time thinking of a catchy opening - if you can't think of one, write something simple and come back to it at the end



Tips from **the experts**

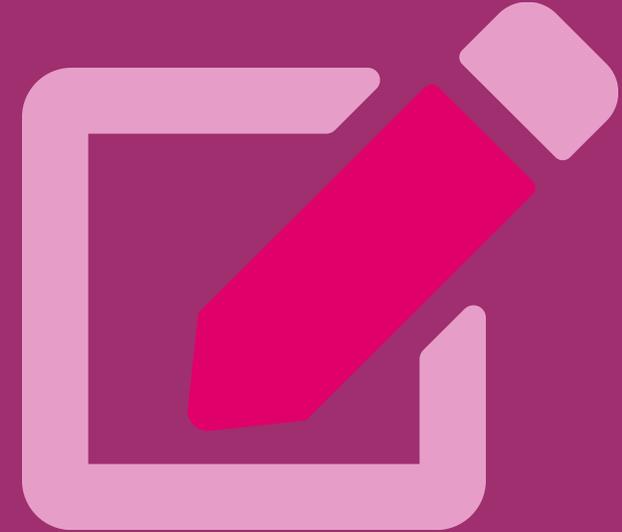
- Your interest in the course is the biggest thing. Start with why you chose it
- The best personal statements get to the point quickly
- It's your enthusiasm for the course we want to know about - start with that
- Start with a short sentence that captures the reason why you are interested in studying the area you are applying for and that communicates your enthusiasm for it



Main Paragraphs

What to include:

1. **Studies** – reflect on interesting things you have learned rather than listing module titles
2. **Knowledge** about the subject or career vocation from either work experience or wider interest
3. **Skills** that will help with the course or with managing university life in general
4. **Achievements** you are proud of (accredited or non-accredited) or positions of responsibility held.
5. **Hobbies, interests and social activities** – what makes you an interesting person



Top Tip: If applying for a vocational degree, discuss the regulator the profession – for example the Nursing and Midwifery Council



Main paragraphs

How to write:

1. Link your points back to the course
2. Demonstrate your personality, skills and abilities
3. Prioritise your points and only include the most relevant to fit within the word count
4. Avoid just listing your achievements – expand on your points

Try the A-B-C method

If you are struggling to structure your points, have a go at the following:

Activity:

Maybe you've volunteered in your local charity shop or played in a sports team.

Benefit:

What are the transferrable skills you've acquired by doing this activity?

For example - leadership, communication or self-motivation skills.

Course (Connect):

How does this relate to the course you are applying for? Would you need to display leadership skills in group projects? How will you use these communication skills as a Nurse/Social Worker/Teacher? Will your self-motivation help you juggle family life and studying?

Expand your points

If you feel like you are listing activities and need to expand your point, try asking yourself,

So what?

EXAMPLE

I currently run my own business selling makeup online *SO WHAT?* which has developed my skills in speaking to different people including customers and suppliers. *SO WHAT?* As a Nurse, communication is one of the six C's which are values essential to providing compassionate care. Clear communication is an essential part of team work when speaking with a range of clinicians and also important when speaking to patients' families. I am confident I can adapt my communication style to provide compassionate care, as I take the time to listen to my clients' needs just as I will constantly listen to my patients to ensure they remain at the centre of my practice.

Conclusion

- Reinforce what you have said in your previous paragraphs
- Keep it brief to retain impact
- You could mention career aspirations if you haven't done already
- You could suggest what kind of student you think you would be on the course

“I realise medicine will be a very demanding course both academically and in the commitment required from me, though I know that I have prepared well for such a path in life, and I am confident that I can succeed.”



Finalising your personal statement



“Your personal statement must be really well written, with good grammar. Getting this right makes a great first impression.”

- Dr Simon Desbruslais, Music,
University of Hull

Proof reading

Examples from University applicants:

A university diploma holder who has proven that they can achieve in university. Very hard working person with a love of all things **academic**.

In my **time time** in the **university** of hull **i** learnt the modules that underpin the subject as a whole achieving not only a diploma but a certificate of higher education. I would **like** the opportunity to further my career and studies at your higher education **insttiute** where **i** will obtain a **bsc** honours degree.

The subject itself is now my career with a passion for **heamtology** that must be filled , also **i** am very interested in biochemistry as the two **mdoles** are some of the main **components** in **modren** biomedical science that allow **fut=rther** research and experimentation.

I understand that **i** will undergo a research or **finial** year project whilst in your university, **i** have a very flexible **wirking knowlegde** of the laboratory and will put it to good use after a few years already of university level work.

Hopefully you **wilk** give me this chance to study with and take my application further.

Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Get started ASAP – bullet point things you might like to include
- Demonstrate commitment, enthusiasm & passion
- Write a draft, redraft, & redraft
- Have a clear structure – use paragraphs
- Get others to check what you have written – suggest improvements
- Check grammar, punctuation & spelling

Don't:

- Copy: statements are checked using advanced software
- Mention a specific institution unless you are only applying to one
- Talk about your current syllabus in lots of detail
- Try to be funny or controversial
- Don't overcomplicate!