

**PERSONAL
STATEMENT
GUIDANCE**


THIS SESSION

- Learn what a Personal Statement is.
- Learn how a Personal Statement is used as part of the selection process in UCAS applications, and why it is important for everyone in Y12/13 to write one.
- Learn what to include and avoid in a Personal Statement
- Take notes during this session, as you may not be ready to write your Personal Statement yet, but you will need the advice to hand at some point.

**WHAT IS A
PERSONAL
STATEMENT?**

A PERSONAL STATEMENT IS A PIECE OF ORIGINAL WRITING, BY YOU, ABOUT YOUR SUITABILITY FOR A COURSE/JOB.

- The skill of writing a ‘personal statement’ is transferable and beneficial to all post 18 progression.
- Apprenticeship providers, colleges and employers will usually ask for a personal statement as part of an application, although it may be called different things such as “supporting statement” or may be in the form of a “letter of application”.
- **All UCAS applications require a personal statement.**



**AT BROOKFIELD
WE ASK ALL
SIXTH FORMERS
TO WRITE A
PERSONAL
STATEMENT.**

WHAT IS A PERSONAL STATEMENT FOR?

- Most Higher Education providers and employers are looking for RELEVANT information and experience, EVIDENCE of suitability for the course/job, and a sense of your passion, commitment and maybe, your personality.
- They can learn more about you beyond your stated qualifications and certificates.
- They will also judge your ability to communicate effectively in writing.
- If you do not currently want to go to university, you might at some point and so we need your personal statement on file so we can write a reference for you should you request one in the future.

WHY ALL THE FUSS?

- Most students find writing a personal statement a challenge.
- You typically have to fill a blank page writing positive, relevant stuff about yourself.
- You also have to show you really understand the demands of the course/job.
- It feels awkward at first to write only about your good points; and to people you've never met.
- The first draft will probably be too wordy or too brief, too aloof or too personal – it's not easy to get the tone right.

WHAT ADVICE CAN I GET?

- You will need to get advice from teachers, parents and friends, by giving it to one person at a time to read and then acting on their feedback.
- You will end up doing SEVERAL drafts of this, so it takes a long time and it is a good idea to get started early.
- You can't really finish the personal statement until you know exactly what you're applying for, but you can definitely do some preparatory work straight away.

(UCAS = UNIVERSITIES & COLLEGES ADMISSIONS SERVICE)

UCAS SAYS:

Personal statement

- The only section a student has total control over.
- Their only chance to sell themselves as an individual.
- One personal statement for all choices.

UCAS similarity detection service
Remember, every personal statement is run through software to check for plagiarism.



- Maximum of 4,000 characters or 47 lines.
- Minimum of 1,000 characters.
- No spelling or grammar check.
- No formatting, e.g. bold, italics or underline.

Personal statement – top tips

Students need to tell providers about their:

- academic achievements - past and present
- enthusiasm – go beyond the syllabus
- interest in their chosen subject
- knowledge of the subject
- independent study skills



Personal statement – top tips

Universities and colleges will ask:

- Have they chosen the right subject for the right reasons?
- Can they survive in an intense and pressured atmosphere?
- Do they have a range of interests and aptitudes?
- Do they have a depth of interest in the subject?
- Has the candidate studied independently?
- Does the student appear motivated and committed?
- Do they possess good numeracy and literacy skills?



VIDEO CLIP -

**“PERSONAL STATEMENTS - FINDING A
FORMULA”**



**KEY POINTS
FROM THE VIDEO**

WHAT TO INCLUDE:

Start writing/typing your ideas in any order – get lots of ideas down to work with.

- What interests and excites you about the course.
- How you have pursued that interest so far.
- Evidence that you have the skills to cope.
- Things you do which are interesting and unique (and relevant)

Then, use the ideas you've compiled to start writing a proper first draft:

- A punchy opening paragraph - show you're really keen & understand what the course will be.
- A chunky middle paragraph – all your evidence to show you're really interested & can cope.
- Final, personal paragraph – about your unique qualities.

WHAT TO AVOID:

- TOO MANY WORDS
- ARROGANCE
- FANCY LANGUAGE
- *CLICHÉS*
- COPYING (from ANYONE/ANYWHERE!)

COPYING.

- Plagiarism or academic fraud is taken very seriously by UCAS and by universities in general.

It means **taking somebody else's words and passing them off as your own**, including in your personal statement.

- There is effective software run by UCAS and by individual universities to detect copying.
- Personal statements are checked against over 1 million statements past and present, those on websites and in books.

IT IS NOT WORTH IT

- Thousands of students are caught plagiarising sections of their personal statements each year – some are identical to other applicants statements or online examples e.g. The Student Room.
- You risk having your application cancelled and all your course choices informed.
- However, as long as you write it yourself you do not need to worry unduly – there will always be some similar phrases used in applications, and it is only if your personal statement matches above a certain percentage that it will be considered copied.

VIDEO CLIP -

**“PERSONAL STATEMENTS - DO’S AND
DON’TS”**



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

Personal Statements advice from Heads of Admissions...

“We are looking out for relevant information, detail and skills and work experience.”

“We want to see students demonstrating their motivation, interest, passion and enthusiasm FOR THE DEGREE COURSE.”

“Imagine you are talking to the Admissions Tutor and trying to persuade them to give you the last available place on their course!”

YOUR STATEMENT MUST BE -

- Positive
 - Persuasive
 - Personal to you
- and strictly **NO** plagiarism!

YOU MUST SHOW -

- Evidence
- (relevant) Experience
- Excellent English

**RESOURCES
TO HELP YOU:**

- YOUR BLUE GUIDANCE BOOKLET
- THERE IS A TEMPLATE TO HELP YOU DRAFT A PERSONAL STATEMENT IF YOU WISH
- **THE UCAS WEBSITE:
WWW.UCAS.COM/PERSONALSTATEMENT**

ANY QUESTIONS?