

# PERSONAL STATEMENTS

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## HOW TO WRITE AN EFFECTIVE PERSONAL STATEMENT

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### STEP ONE

To make a start on your personal statement write some relevant notes under the following headings so you have something to work with when it comes to writing up your first draft.

#### Choice of course(s)

Reasons for choice of course.

Links to Career aims if relevant.

What have you enjoyed about your AS/BTEC subjects?

What skills/experiences offered by your college subjects help to explain your choice of H.E course?

#### Work Experience

Experience related to the chosen course.

Other part-time work, work experience placements, voluntary work. This is crucial for some courses e.g. teaching and Health related careers.

Make sure it is all relevant to the course or mention how the skills can be transferred.

#### School/ College Experience

Responsibilities in Yr10/11 and at College e.g. Prefect, Student Council Rep, Theatre, Music, Sport

List any skills you feel these promote e.g. leadership, communication, motivation, organisation, I.T., numeracy

#### Out of College Experiences

Sports, hobbies, further research or academic reading etc. [They will want some indication of your general interests, no matter how specialised the application.]

Again, mention the skills you have gained from these activities.

#### Deferred Entry

You should explain why you are applying for deferred entry, be as specific as space allows, including how you intend to use the time.

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### STEP TWO

Use the guidelines produced by your chosen universities when composing your personal statement: these are more important than any other advice, including that in this guide!

The Personal Statement is an integral part of the whole UCAS application. You need to include what isn't included anywhere else in the application. Remember that the Personal Statement needs to promote you as a good candidate for ALL of the courses you have chosen, so ensure there is consistency in your choice of courses, and that you are satisfying the admissions tutor at all of your chosen universities/colleges.

#### Paragraphs 1 – 3

##### INCLUDE:

Why this degree/diploma course?

How did you choose it, why are you right for it?

If it's an academic course, describe your intellectual, educational reasons for choosing it. How has your education to date helped prepare you for it?

If it's a more vocational course, include more about your vocational experience/research and its relevance to your application.

The balance between the academic/vocational elements (which will take up 2 or 3 of your 4 or 5 paragraphs, and nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the total words available), will depend on whether the course is necessary to obtaining a career, such as Architecture or Speech Therapy, a course you wish to study for its own sake, e.g. Philosophy, or a course which you are already anticipating will help you to obtain a career in a related profession, e.g. Media Studies or Business Studies.

#### Paragraph 4

This will cover clubs/societies/interests in and out of school/ college, especially personal skills which you feel have been developed by these activities.

#### Paragraph 5

Depending on space remaining, there may be a fifth paragraph which gives you the chance to emphasise what you hope to gain from the higher education experience as a whole. If space is at a premium, THIS is the paragraph to cut.

### STEP THREE

Show your first draft to your Academic Advocate; also hand her/him your Applicant Profile sheet at the same time. They will arrange to discuss this with you, and/or arrange for you to see other advisers/ tutors in college.