A Guide to Writing a Personal Statement

The personal statement is one of the most important parts of your university application. This is your chance to shine and prove to the university that they should pick you over many applicants. You need to show that you are a well-rounded individual who is enthusiastic to succeed in your chosen discipline.

Before you sit down to write your personal statement, the first thing to do is write a plan. This should include all the main points you want to include in your personal statement.

We have provided our own worksheet, as seen below, for you to print out locally and plan your personal statement but please remember, this is only a guideline and does not have to be strictly followed.

PLAN

Why are you applying to your chosen course?

Why does this subject interest you?

Does what you have previously studied relate to the course? If so, how?

What makes you suitable for this course? E.g. your skills and experience

Have you taken part in anything else that shows your interest in the course?

Have you had any positions of responsibility that make you unique?

What hobbies and interests do you have? Try to link them to your course!

What jobs, work experience or volunteer work have you done that is related to your course?

Explain how this course links to future plans e.g. career aspirations

Do you have any examples of texts you have read relating to the course?

International Students: Why do you want to study in the UK?

Mature Students: What have you been doing since leaving full-time education?

Dos and Don'ts

✓ Use proper English, making sure you triple check spelling, grammar and punctuation.

✓ Write a draft *before* you write your final copy. Chances are, you will change what you've written a lot before you send it off.

✓ Ask people, such as your teachers and family, to provide feedback.

✓ Show all your strengths. If you don't believe in yourself, why should they believe in you and give you a place?

✓ Be enthusiastic about the course you're applying for. There is no point applying for a course and spending money on something you don't *really* want to do.

✖ Don't make anything up. Chances are, even if they fall for the lie in your statement, they'll probably catch you out in the interview.

✖ Don't leave your personal statement to the last minute. It will be rushed and you may not remember everything you want to include.

✖ Don't rely completely on spellchecker and the "synonym" tool. Use your brain; the computer won't be able to do everything for you.

✖ Don't use cliché phrases. The people at the universities will think you're unoriginal and may stop reading there.

✖ Remember the same personal statement is sent to each of your universities so avoid personalising it!

✖ Don't copy. Universities have tools to check whether your personal statement has been plagiarised. Do you *really* want to risk it?

The Facts

- Your personal statement should not exceed **4000 characters** or **47 lines**.

- There is a deadline that you must meet when sending your whole university application.

- Double check any fees which may be involved before sending your application off. If applying via UCAS, the cost is £12 for one course or £23 for multiple courses and any applications sent after 30th June.

- It may be best to write your statement in a word processor before copying and pasting into the university application but please bear in mind that the character count can vary between the two.

Good luck from everyone at ABMA Education.