

# PERSONAL STATEMENTS

TIPS AND HINTS

## WHAT IS A PERSONAL STATEMENT?

Your UCAS Personal Statement outlines why you want to study a particular course at university and is an opportunity for you to demonstrate you have the skills, knowledge and experience to succeed on the course.

It can be a maximum of 47 lines (including blank lines) or 4000 characters long (including spaces), whichever comes first. You can't use bold, italic or underlining and you should structure your statement into paragraphs, rather than using bullet points.

It is an opportunity for the admissions tutor to find out more about you, your academic achievements, your interests and your motivation(s) for studying at Higher Education level. This will then help to inform them whether or not to offer you a place.

### How important is the personal statement?

The personal statement is one of the stepping stones to studying at university. It's important because:

- Courses are increasingly competitive
- It prepares you for future job applications
- Not all universities interview
- It's your opportunity to sell yourself

**Remember that your personal statement is important but it's not everything: it's just one part of the overall picture.**

## GETTING STARTED

### Preparation is key!

- You can only write one personal statement, so don't mention a university or college by name
- Check university and college websites to see what skills and qualities they'd like you to have
- Make a list of things you want to include.
- Start drafting early

### What is being looked for?

- Students with the academic potential to benefit from the course
- Students who are motivated towards studying this particular kind of course
- Students with relevant experience for the course
- The personal skills a student can bring to the course
- The interests that a student has

## AT AUB

### If your applying to AUB, we would like you to demonstrate the following in your personal statement

- An understanding of the course your applying to
- An idea of why you want to study the course/subject
- Your passion / interest
- Key influences on your work
- Knowledge of the subject
- Your experience

## HOW TO SELL YOURSELF IN THE RIGHT WAY

### What is being looked for?

- An understanding of the course
- Independent study skills
- Self-awareness
- Motivation and commitment
- Good literacy and numeracy
- Research skills
- Essay writing, don't write lists
- Enthusiasm – going beyond the norm
- Time management skills
- Reflective thinking

### ABC rule

#### Activity: what have you done?

I mentor younger students at an after school photography class

#### Benefit: what skills have you gained?

This shows I have good communication and team working skills

#### Course: how will this prepare you for the course?

This is relevant to Photography as being able to communicate effectively is an important skill when working with models and hair and make-up artists on shoots but also when doing group project work.

### Points to remember

- Strong opening paragraph and conclusion
- Research into the courses will help you
- 80% academic, 20% extra curricular
- Be honest
- Draft, redraft, and proof read
- There's no perfect statement

## DO'S AND DON'TS

### DON'T

- be tempted to make anything up, as you might be asked about it at interview
- copy anyone else's personal statement. UCAS uses plagiarism detection software
- list qualifications like your GCSE grades or anything else that's covered elsewhere on the application
- just list your other achievements: you need to evaluate them
- feel the need to be dramatic in order to be memorable

### DO

- apply for a course you really want to study
- be yourself: tell the truth about your interests
- sell yourself: this is not the time for modesty
- Keep a copy of your personal statement and reread it before your interview – this may be used as a starting point for conversation
- read the UCAS guidance on personal statements

See the UCAS website for handy tools and tips:  
[ucas.com/personalstatement](https://ucas.com/personalstatement)