

Personal statements



UCAS

Security marking: PUBLIC

Personal statements

Personal statements are about selling yourself. You're about to be given a piece of fruit or a vegetable. You'll have five minutes to prepare a 30-second pitch to promote your produce.

Think about factors such as:

- why your fruit/veg is the best
- its benefits and uses
- why it is more appealing than others

Get ready to sell your fruit or vegetable to the group!



From a university perspective

‘With many highly qualified students applying to university, the personal statement is crucial in helping us identify students with the greatest merit and aptitude for our courses.’

University of Manchester

What is being looked for?

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

Points to remember

- Strong opening paragraph.
- Research into courses will help you.
- 80% academic, 20% extracurricular.
- Be honest.
- Draft, redraft, and proofread.
- There's no perfect statement.

Be wary of spellcheck!

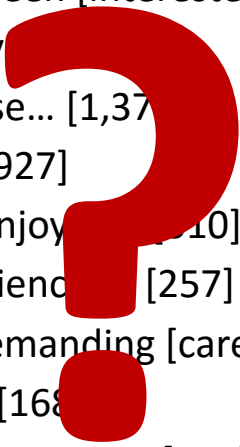
'It was a catch
12 situation.'

'I think of
myself as a
worm hearted
individual.'

'English is like
a second
language to I.'

'Twice a week, I
attend marital
arts classes.'

Most common opening lines

1. From a young age, I have (always) been [interested in/fascinated by]... [1,779]
 2. For as long as I can remember, I have...
 3. I am applying for this course because... [1,377]
 4. I have always been interested in... [927]
 5. Throughout my life, I have always enjoyed... [810]
 6. Reflecting on my educational experience... [257]
 7. Nursing is a very challenging and demanding [career/course]... [211]
 8. Academically, I have always been... [168]
 9. I have always wanted to pursue a career in... [160]
 10. I have always been passionate about... [160]
- 

Effective, efficient, and economical

Get into the habit of being very critical with the number or choice of words that you use in each sentence. Once you have written something, go back and decide if each and every word you have written needs to be there. If you subsequently decide that something doesn't add value to your personal statement, then you should probably remove it, rephrase it, or replace it.



Effective, efficient, and economical

Be critical with the words you use.
Decide if every word needs to be there.
If something doesn't add value, you
should rephrase it.



ABC rule... so what?

Activity – what have you done?

Benefit – what skills have you gained?

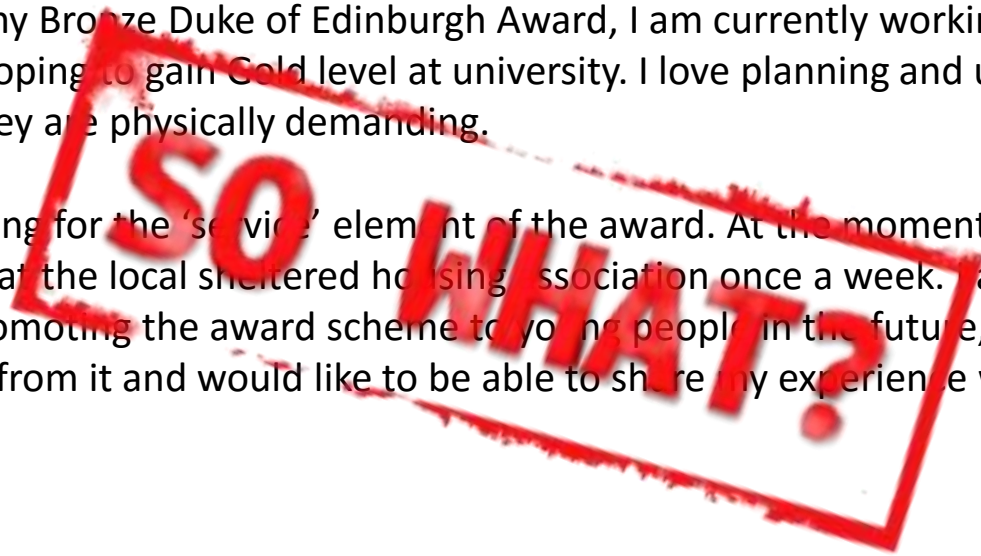
Course – how will this prepare you for the course?



First draft

I have achieved my Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award, I am currently working towards my Silver, and I am hoping to gain Gold level at university. I love planning and undertaking expeditions as they are physically demanding.

I also enjoy working for the 'service' element of the award. At the moment, I visit the elderly residents at the local sheltered housing association once a week. I am hoping to be involved in promoting the award scheme to young people in the future, as I have really benefitted from it and would like to be able to share my experience with others.



Second draft

Through participation in the Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award, I have learnt the importance of planning, collaboration, and commitment, particularly in physically and emotionally demanding situations, such as the expeditions. I believe these skills will help me have the courage and competence to deal with the challenging circumstances a career in nursing could present.

My volunteer work at the local sheltered housing association, for the 'service' element of the award, can be emotionally draining, but is incredibly rewarding. It has allowed me to develop compassion and empathy for those in different circumstances to my own, and improved my care and communication skills.

UCAS' similarity detection service

Every personal statement is put through similarity detection.

Personal statements are checked against:

- a library of personal statements previously submitted to UCAS
- sample statements collected from a variety of websites
- other sources, including paper publications

Each personal statement received at UCAS is added to the library of statements after it has been processed.

Analysing personal statements

- Read through the two example personal statements on the A3 laminated sheets.
- Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each, noting them down on the laminated version.
- You can also use the analysis sheet to help you.

Personal statement resources

Host of personal statement [support and information](#) including:

- Dos and donts
- Blogs on writing personal statements
- [FAQs](#) on personal statements answered by admissions staff
- Ten places to find [pointers](#)
- [Mind map](#)
- [Worksheet](#)
- [UCAS' personal statement tool](#)
- Duke of Edinburgh Award - [guidance for UCAS personal statement](#)

PREPARING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT UCAS

- 1. PREPARATION**
 - > You can only write one personal statement, so don't mention a uni or college by name.
 - > Check uni 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.
- 2. WHAT TO INCLUDE**
 - > Why you're interested in the subject.
 - > Your enthusiasm for the subject.
 - > How your previous studies relate to the course(s).
 - > Relevant aspects of jobs, placement, work experience or volunteering.
 - > Activities or hobbies that show your interest in the subject.
 - > Any training or achievements that show your skills.
 - > Demonstrate you're a great candidate and you have skills and qualities they're looking for.
- 3. HOW TO WRITE IT**
 - > Introduction – start with an opening sentence that encourages the reader to read on.
 - > Structure what you want to include in an order that's most relevant to what the uni and colleges are looking for.
 - > Conclusion – reinforce your commitment, enthusiasm and skills suited to uni/college life.
 - > Check your grammar, spelling and punctuation.
 - > Leave time to get feedback and redraft.
- 4. TECHNICAL DETAILS**
 - > Length – up to 4,000 characters or 47 lines of text (including spaces and blank lines).
 - > Make sure you don't copy – our software detects any similarities and this could jeopardise your application.

Personal statement worksheet

This worksheet is designed to help you think about information you could include in your personal statement. We've included space for you to write down any thoughts you have as you go along. More detailed advice and guidance about writing your personal statement, including our UCAS's video guide, is available at www.ucas.com/personalstatement.

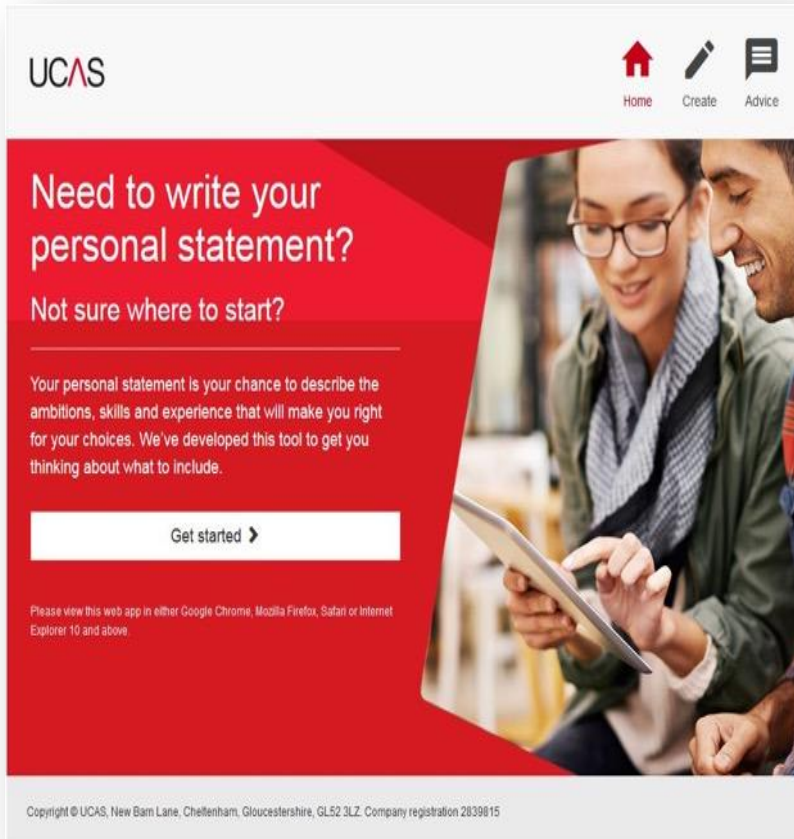
Writing about the course

Why are you applying for your chosen course(s)?

Why does this subject interest you? Include evidence that you understand what's required to study the course, e.g. if applying for psychology courses, show that you know how scientific the subject is.

VOLUNTEERING	PHYSICAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliable Time management Self-motivation Commitment Teamwork Compassion/caring for others Supporting the local community Position of responsibility Understanding of strengths and weaknesses Leadership Communication with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved physical health and wellbeing Working towards a goal Having fun Developing an interest Working with others Commitment Recognising achievement Meeting a challenge Skill development and co-ordination Understanding of rules and safety Reflecting on progress Leadership
SKILLS	EXPEDITION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of social and practical skills Increased confidence and self-esteem Ability to learn new things Working with others Commitment Meet new challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working as a team Problem solving, decision making and dealing with the consequences Commitment Communication with others Leadership Self-sufficient Organised Awareness of safety and recognising hazards Dealing with unexpected challenges Achievement of shared goals
RESIDENTIAL	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidence in unfamiliar environment Ability to meet new people and build new relationships Accept responsibility for self and others Develop respect and understanding for others Develop skills and attitudes to live and work for others 	

Our personal statement tool



The landing page features a red background with a white navigation bar at the top containing the UCAS logo and three icons: Home (house), Create (pencil), and Advice (speech bubble). The main content area is split into text on the left and a photo of a young woman and man looking at a tablet on the right. The text includes a large heading, a sub-heading, a paragraph, and a 'Get started' button. At the bottom, there is a small disclaimer and copyright information.

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Home Create Advice

Need to write your personal statement?

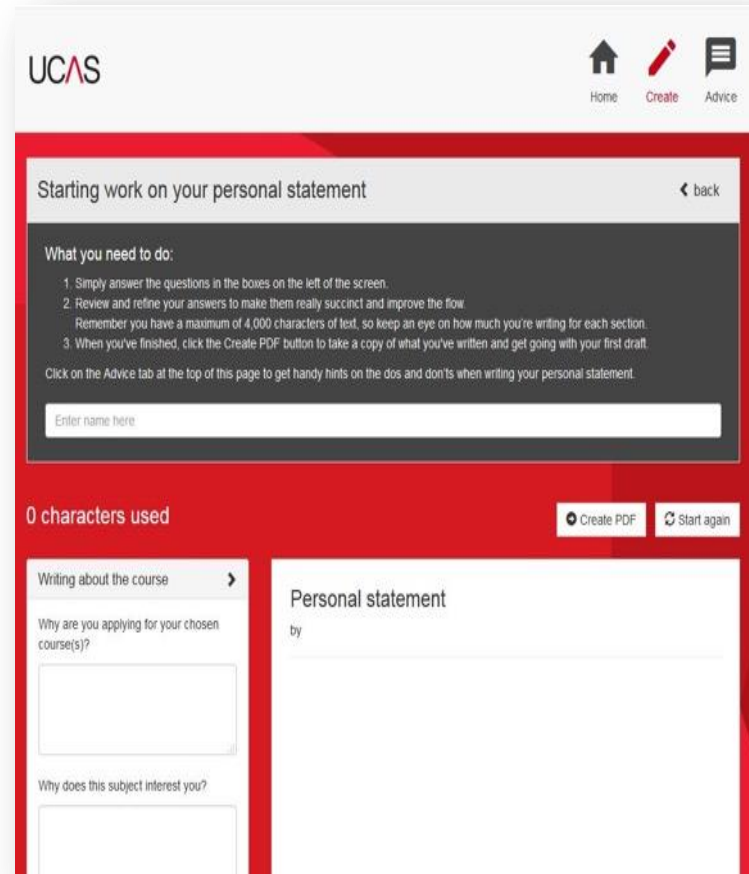
Not sure where to start?

Your personal statement is your chance to describe the ambitions, skills and experience that will make you right for your choices. We've developed this tool to get you thinking about what to include.

[Get started >](#)

Please view this web app in either Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Safari or Internet Explorer 10 and above

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The writing interface has a red background with a white navigation bar at the top containing the UCAS logo and three icons: Home (house), Create (pencil), and Advice (speech bubble). The main content area is split into a left sidebar and a right main panel. The sidebar has a 'Writing about the course' section with two questions and text input boxes. The main panel has a 'Personal statement' section with a 'by' label and a large text input box. At the top of the main panel, there is a 'Starting work on your personal statement' header with a 'back' link, a 'What you need to do' section with three numbered instructions, a 'Click on the Advice tab...' note, and an 'Enter name here' input box. At the bottom of the main panel, there is a '0 characters used' indicator and two buttons: 'Create PDF' and 'Start again'.

UCAS

Home Create Advice

Starting work on your personal statement [back](#)

What you need to do:

1. Simply answer the questions in the boxes on the left of the screen.
2. Review and refine your answers to make them really succinct and improve the flow. Remember you have a maximum of 4,000 characters of text, so keep an eye on how much you're writing for each section.
3. When you've finished, click the Create PDF button to take a copy of what you've written and get going with your first draft.

Click on the Advice tab at the top of this page to get handy hints on the dos and don'ts when writing your personal statement.

0 characters used [Create PDF](#) [Start again](#)

Writing about the course

Why are you applying for your chosen course(s)?

Why does this subject interest you?

Personal statement

by